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ABSTRACT

The first of two volumes dealing with the effective use of textbooks to teach reading, this booklet describes New Zealand's "Ready to Read" program and how materials are used in the curriculum to accomplish literacy goals. The first part of the booklet provides a general overview of the country and its educational system and of the remaining sections of the booklet. The second part explores the distinctive features of the New Zealand style of reading instruction, particularly in the primary grades, and includes the educational and child development philosophies underlying the curriculum. The third part describes the functions of the school publications branch of the New Zealand Department of Education, including the various kinds of publishing activities and its planning and policies relating to the provision of textbooks and materials. The fourth part describes the "Ready to Read" revision and extension project, undertaken to evaluate and revise the reading series used in the New Zealand curriculum, while the fifth part discusses inservice teacher training in New Zealand and how it has been adapted for development of teachers of reading. (HTH)

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Textbooks and Reading Materials

Volume One: The Ready to Read Project—the New Zealand Experience

Report of a Regional Seminar on Textbooks and Reading Materials, Wellington, New Zealand, 4–12 October 1983

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Preface

The Regional Seminar on Textbooks and Reading Materials was organized by the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, and its Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development, jointly with the New Zealand Department of Education through the New Zealand National Commission for Unesco.

This paper was prepared by Neil Leckie,
a former Director in the Department of
Education

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Part One General Overview

Section A The Country

Brief Geographical Description

New Zealand is an island nation in the temperate latitudes of the South Pacific Ocean midway between the Equator and the Antarctic. Lying just west of the International Date Line and separated from Australia by approximately 1500 kilometres of the Tasman Sea, it comprises two main islands with numerous smaller islands. The country stretches over two thousand kilometres from north to south, but no part of it is more than 110 kilometres from the sea. Much of the country is mountainous and hilly. The lowland plains are found mainly in coastal areas.

The People

Eighty-six percent of New Zealand's inhabitants are of European, mainly British, descent with the great majority (almost eighty-five percent) being New Zealand born. The indigenous Maori people of Polynesian origin form the largest ethnic minority—about nine to twelve percent of the total. There has been a large measure of intermarriage between the two groups. There are other significant groups of people from Pacific Island nations, and of Chinese and Indian origin. New Zealanders are a fairly homogeneous people and most speak English as their first language. In the last decade, much effort has gone into measures aimed at preserving the Maori language and increasing its use, and to giving greater recognition to the multicultural nature of New Zealand society.

In recent times, New Zealand has experienced a decline in its birth rate. This decline, along with a reduction in immigration and some emigration, has meant that after several decades of rapid increase, population growth has been minimal. The most recent estimates place the total population at 3.2 million. The declining birth rate has resulted in smaller numbers of enrolments in the primary schools. The effect of this will be that the total school population will continue to decrease in the years ahead. Already there have been substantial reductions in the numbers of teachers being trained, particularly for the primary service, while a small number of secondary schools is already being affected by declining rolls.

For a number of reasons, including the terrain, New Zealand's population is unevenly distributed throughout the country. Three quarters live in the North Island. Most (eighty-four percent) live in urban areas, with the majority of the rural population being found in the lowland coastal plains. The overall population density is low, averaging about twelve persons per square kilometre.

The large majority of the working population is employed in the manufacturing and servicing industries. While manufactured products have been making an increasing contribution to New Zealand's export earnings, agricultural exports in the form of meat, wool, dairy products, and fruit earn the major portion. Forestry, and to a lesser extent fishing, have been making a significant contribution in recent years.

Government Structures

The New Zealand Parliament is elected for a three-year term and governs the country from Parliament House in the capital city, Wellington. The political party winning the most seats in the House forms the Government, with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet being appointed from its ranks. Parliament is a single chamber legislative body. It passes laws binding on all citizens, and authorises the raising of funds through taxation or by loans to meet the cost of implementing Government policies. These policies are administered by various departments of state, of which the Department of Education is one. The head offices of the various departments are in Wellington, with branch offices located at appropriate population centres throughout the country. The officers who administer the Government's policies are members of a permanently appointed Public Service.

Local government is carried out by a variety of elected or appointed local bodies, boards, or ad hoc authorities authorised by Parliament. Some local bodies, such as city, borough, and county councils, have the power to finance their operations through rating on property, and by raising loans. In most other cases all funding is provided through the Central Government.

Section B Educational Setting

Introduction and Levels

The state education system had its beginning in the 1877 Education Act, which set up primary schools catering for children aged from five to thirteen years, to provide an education that was free, secular, and compulsory. In the early twentieth century the state assumed responsibility for providing most secondary education. Pre-school education in New Zealand had its origins over a hundred years ago, and was provided first on a voluntary, part-time, and limited basis. Over the years, several forms—still on a voluntary and mainly part-time basis—have been developed. With increased Government financial support, pre-school education has become generally available for those children over three years of age whose parents see value in this type of education for their children. Compulsory education begins at the age of six and continues until the age of fifteen, but most children enrol at the age of five, and remain at secondary school until they complete the educational prerequisites for entry to a selected tertiary education institution, or to enable them to take up a suitable occupation. Most of what were private schools have now been integrated into the state system, with special provision being made for them to retain their special characteristics. These schools are generally known as integrated schools. The few remaining non-integrated private schools are entitled to a small measure of Central Government assistance.

The diagram on page 4 sets out the school system in terms of age levels, school facilities, and class levels.

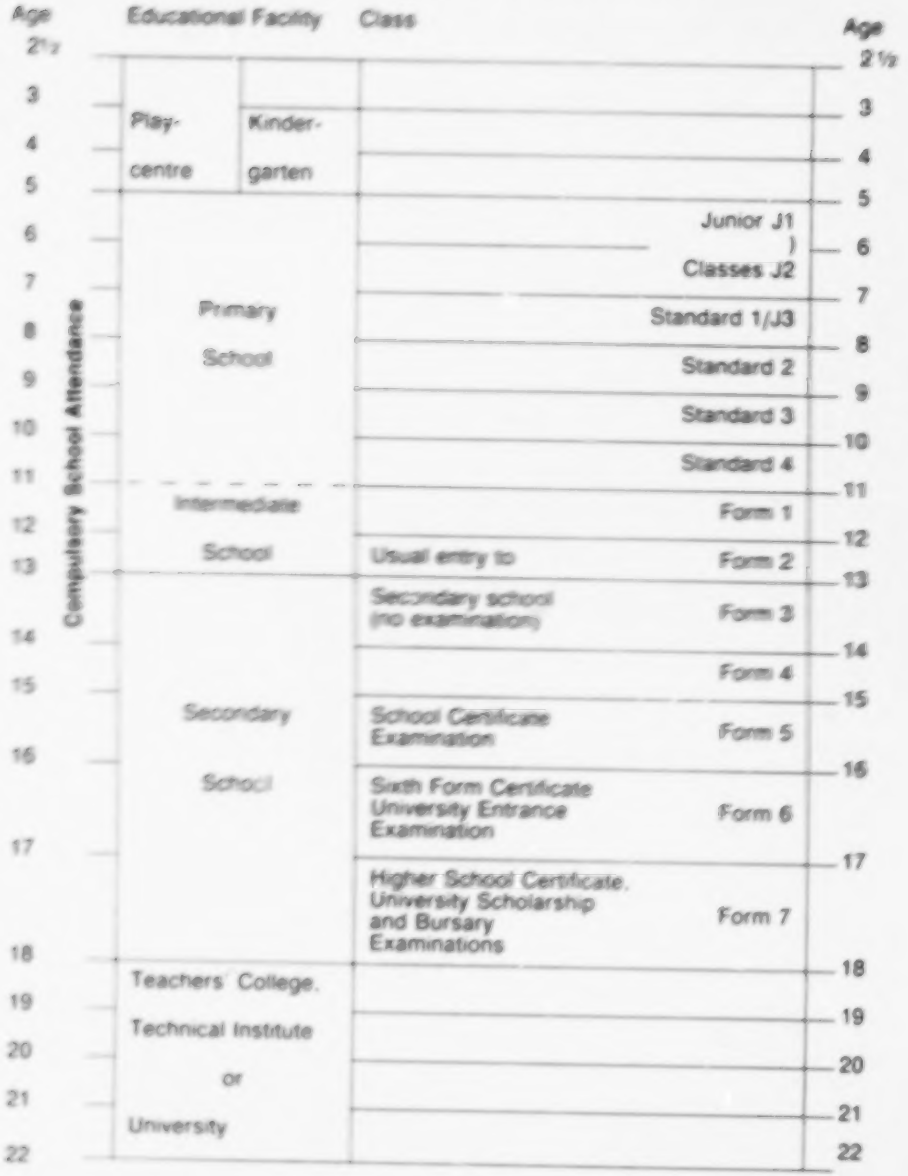
As this booklet will be mainly concerned with the provision of textbooks and materials at the primary school level, the remainder of this section will be largely oriented to this level.

Administrative Structures and Control

a The Department of Education

The Minister of Education is responsible to the Government of the day, and to Parliament, for the effective and efficient administration of the school system, and for the implementation of Government policies in education. Appointed officials advise and assist him in this task. Chief of these is the Director-General of Education, who is the permanent head of the Department of Education. This central administrative body is responsible for administering the Education Act, 1964, and its amendments, the regulations made in accordance with the Act, and other acts and regulations which have a bearing on the education system. The Department's duties include: advising the Minister of Education on policy and development; distributing Government funds to educational institutions; and ensuring that standards are maintained. The Department inspects all schools, develops and issues syllabuses, conducts the School Certificate (fifth form) examination, grants sixth form certificates and secondary school bursaries, and arranges school transport. It organises the recruitment, training, and assessment of teachers.

Educational facilities provided for the typical New Zealand Child



ensures that schools are built and equipped when and where required, directly controls a small number of departmental schools, the Correspondence School, and the Psychological Service, and employs advisers in specialised school subjects or areas such as advisers on reading, advisers to junior classes, and advisers on the education of Maoris and Pacific Islanders.

b Education Boards

At the primary level, New Zealand is divided into ten education board districts, based largely on the provincial districts of earlier times, and established in accordance with the Education Act. The members of the elected committees of each of the primary and intermediate schools in the board district elect most members of a district education board. In addition, one member is appointed to represent all teachers employed by the board, and one to represent the proprietors of all the integrated schools in the district. These ten statutory bodies control primary education in accordance with the acts and regulations enacted by the Central Government and the funds made available by it. They employ and appoint teachers, pay teachers in accordance with scales set by the Government, administer and distribute grants made to the boards and the schools, store and distribute equipment and materials, organise school transport within the board district, maintain existing schools, and buy sites for and construct new schools. The education board is advised on the professional work of the schools by a district senior inspector and a team of inspectors, who are employed by the Department of Education.

c School Committees

School committees are statutory bodies elected biennially by parents and householders in the area served by each state primary school. Subject to the general supervision and control of the district education board, they are responsible for the day to day management and care of the school buildings, grounds, and equipment. Each committee works closely with the school principal and the teaching staff in arranging the conditions which enable the school to provide the children with a successful education. The committee members interest themselves keenly in the general activities of the school. School committees, along with the voluntary parent-teacher or home and school associations, provide a focusing point for local opinion on primary education.

Involvement of Teacher and Parent Interests

Most primary teachers are members of the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), which is the organisation recognised by the Government for representing teachers' interests, particularly at the primary level. The Institute's stated goals are to advance the cause of education generally, while, at the same time, pursuing the just claims of its members. In the hundred years of its existence, it has played a major part in curriculum development, through consultation at ministerial, departmental, and local levels, through representations made to commissions of enquiry or other appropriate authorities, and through membership of a variety

of committees. In matters affecting teachers and the work of the primary schools, the Government seldom takes action without taking fully into account the views of primary teachers as represented by their organisation.

Parents have ready access to the teachers of their children, and frequently avail themselves of the opportunity to consult with the school principal and class teachers on matters affecting the educational progress and general welfare of their children. Provision is made for teachers to report to parents on two occasions each year. Reference has already been made to parents' involvement in the voluntary parent-teacher associations, and the statutory school committees and education boards. These three groups also operate at a national level, through policy-making annual meetings and executive structures, and, in line with their approved policies, make representations to the Government and the Department of Education on matters of interest or concern. Individual parents may also make representations to the school principal, the school committee, the education board, the Director-General of Education, their local Member of Parliament, and the Minister of Education—and many do.

Funding

As part of New Zealand's free, secular, and compulsory education system, all funding essential to the provision, maintenance, and operation of primary schools is provided by the Central Government from taxation and loan money. Each year the Government presents to Parliament its Budget setting out the estimates of expenditure for each department for the year. These estimates are examined in detail by the Public Expenditure Committee, which is made up of Government and Opposition Members of Parliament. The estimates are then debated in the House, and approved.

Vote Education is divided into eight expenditure programmes, namely: administration and general, pre-school education, education support services, operations of schools, teacher education, senior technical and community education, university education, and national library. Several of these expenditure programmes have relevance to the operation of the primary school system and to the provision of textbooks and materials. For example, the operations of the Curriculum Development Division and its School Publications Branch are largely financed through Programme III: Education and Support Services. Grants for operating and equipping primary schools are paid for through Programme IV: Operations of Schools. Much of the money is disbursed through the Department of Education to the appropriate controlling authority of the educational institution concerned. In the case of primary schools, the controlling authority is the education board, which expends the money in accordance with various regulations, such as the Education Boards Grants Regulations. Appropriate grants are also made available to school committees to enable them to meet budgeted expenditure incurred in carrying out their statutory functions.

Parents are expected to pay the cost of pupils' writing materials, and may also raise funds to provide additional facilities for their local schools. The amount of these voluntary financial contributions can vary considerably from school to school.

Teacher Preparation

The pre-service training of primary school teachers is carried out by teachers' colleges in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. Each is controlled by a teachers' college council, and is closely associated with a neighbouring university. The basic course extends over three years, though this may be shortened if certain requirements have been met. The teachers' college course is followed by a year of probationary teaching in a school. Successful completion of both the teachers' college course and the probationary teaching year leads to certification as a teacher.

For teachers in the schools, several provisions are made for continuing their education, updating their skills, assisting them in the better implementation of existing syllabuses and in the introduction of curriculum changes, and supporting their work with children in the classroom. These provisions generally come under the heading of in-service training. These aspects of teacher preparation are dealt with more fully in Section E.

Curriculum

The primary school curriculum in its present form has evolved over the years, and broadly aims to help each child to develop fully as an individual. For practical purposes, the curriculum of the primary schools is set out in a number of syllabuses. In general, these are broad statements of aims and principles, knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be developed, along with an indication of the content to be covered. On the basis of these syllabuses, each school is required to develop a school scheme which suits the level and needs of the children, and takes into account the locality in which the school is situated. Class teachers are then required to develop class programmes, in accordance with the syllabuses and the school scheme, and to the satisfaction of the school principal and the district senior inspector of schools. Within these general constraints, schools have considerable latitude in developing appropriate programmes to meet the needs of their pupils, and in selecting the methods of implementation and the resources to be used.

All syllabuses must be approved by the Minister of Education. The curriculum is kept under review, and the Minister, when appropriate, approves the revision of a particular syllabus or the development of new approaches or resources, to enable existing syllabuses to be implemented more effectively, in line with the changing needs of children and society generally. In most cases, he sets up revision committees or advisory committees to carry out such revisions. The process involves extensive consultation with interested parties, especially teachers' groups and the inspectorate, and the establishment of a network of local groups and committees to consider or make proposals and to try out materials. Parents' organisations are also involved. Such a process may mean that a syllabus revision or curriculum development project may extend over several years before the Minister formally approves a change in a syllabus.

As the syllabuses which make up the curriculum of the primary schools are national in character, their development and implementation involve an extensive and complex network of agencies and processes. At the national level within the Department of Education, this network is centred on the Curriculum Development Division. The head of the division is the Director, Curriculum Development, who is responsible to the Minister through the Assistant Secretary, Schools and Development, and the Director-General of Education, for the development of national policy in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools, and for resource development for early childhood, primary, secondary, and continuing education, and the community. Two Assistant Directors take responsibility for curriculum development, while a third Assistant Director has responsibility for resources development. Within the Division,various officers have responsibility for a variety of curriculum development projects and for various types of resource development. For example, there are education officers for reading, English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, and one for School Publications. The structure and functions of the School Publications Branch is dealt with more fully in Part Three, as is the range of both human and material resources from within and outside the school system to support the teachers in implementing the curriculum.

Section C Planning, Preparation, Production, Distribution

The planning, preparation, production, and distribution of textbooks and reading materials are covered in Part Three, "The New Zealand School Publications Branch" and Part Four, "The *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project".

Section D Effective Utilisation and Summative Evaluation

The three parts, "Teaching Reading: The New Zealand Style", "The *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project", and "In-Service Training of Teachers in New Zealand and How It Has Been Adapted for Reading" include descriptions of how New Zealand sets out to achieve the effective use of texts and reading materials, and something of the New Zealand experience in achieving this use.

It is usually difficult to discern a time when a final judgement is made as to the effectiveness of a particular resource or publication. A network of consultation and support, however, ensures that there is a continuing flow of information about the effectiveness of a publication.

As needs change, or deficiencies in a publication, syllabus, or some aspects of the curriculum are articulated, a variety of measures may be used to effect improvement. These include a new priority being given to an aspect of in-service training, or the provision of new or supplementary teacher guidelines or handbooks of suggestions, or the development of new or supplementary pupils' texts. Eventually the stage may be reached where a revision committee may be set up as part of what has come to be known as the rolling revision of the curriculum. The machinery for such revision has been outlined in general terms above. Until such time as this procedure results in a new syllabus or the authorisation of new resources or materials, or both, the classroom teacher continues to use or adapt those resources which have already been provided under the free distribution provision, or purchased by the schools themselves through book grants. The old materials are unlikely to be discarded until the teacher feels confident in the use of the newly available materials.

Part Two Teaching Reading : The New Zealand Style

Introduction

One of the expectations of school systems throughout the world is that young children will be taught to read. In this regard New Zealand is no exception. Since the beginning of the New Zealand school system, New Zealand teachers, in striving to realise this expectation, have been influenced by the experience of teachers in other countries and by the advocacy of overseas theorists in the teaching of reading. At the same time, adaptations and innovations have evolved which have seemed appropriate in the New Zealand social and educational context. The result is that in whatever may constitute the New Zealand style of teaching young children to learn to read, there will be much that is common to other styles and approaches. However, approaches developed, together with the differences which have evolved, do constitute a New Zealand style. The differences are seen largely as matters of emphasis, of synthesis, and of balance. They have developed within the New Zealand culture, and arise out of the understandings and beliefs of a large body of New Zealand teachers. Some of these understandings and beliefs relate to what constitutes reading and how children learn to read, especially as a result of their experiences following entry to school, but also including their experiences in the home and the community generally, both before and after they enter school. Others relate to influences inherent in the structure of the school system as it is currently constituted. This section sets out to identify and examine some of the expectations, beliefs, understandings, practices, and resources which, in their various ways, constitute a New Zealand style of teaching reading.

Some Basic Assumptions and Considerations

Reading and Society

There appear to be several assumptions and considerations which to some degree underlie the teaching of reading, and so contribute to the way children are taught and learn to read. New Zealand is a literate society, with an almost universal assumption that everyone can read. This gives rise to the expectation within the community and the school system that every child must be taught to read as well as possible. The assumption and consequent expectation engender a continuing concern about standards in reading at the level of the school system and of the individual. Reading standards and methods of teaching reading are newsworthy, and this media attention reflects community interest and concern.

Reading and Personal Development

There is a general acceptance of the view that personal development is greatly assisted by the ability to read well. Reading is seen to bring rewards to people in terms of personal satisfactions. It gives pleasure and extends experience. It provides information which helps people meet their life needs. The reader not only enjoys but uses reading, and becomes a more fully developed person as a result.

Reading Development—A Continuing Task

There is a general acceptance of the critical importance of the first two or three years at school in making a successful start in learning to read. At the same time, the school system in particular accepts that the task of learning to read extends through all the years of schooling and beyond. The major focus of this paper is on the early years in school. However, it is emphasised that throughout the school system considerable effort is expended and a wide range of resources made available to ensure children's continuing development as successful readers enjoying and using reading.

Reading and Language Acquisition as an Outcome of Experience

Language Acquisition and Experience

During their pre-school years, young children usually acquire oral language as a natural part of their development. Learning to read is regarded as a continuation and an extension of this language acquisition process. Such views are reflected in the pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers, where considerable emphasis is placed on understanding child development, the nature of language, and the process of language acquisition in both oral and written forms.

The experiences of children provide a vital base from which language grows. Experience which provokes a need to communicate provides a purpose for acquiring language, while language which is acquired parallel to and as an outcome of experience is full of meaning. Of particular importance are the experiences children have in the company of, and as they interact with, parents or other adults with whom they have a consistent, caring relationship. The quality of these early and continuing experiences has a significant part to play in the nature of their understandings, the formation and the range of their concepts, and the extent of associated language growth. Such experiences may take place within the home and family environment, in the immediate neighbourhood, and in organised pre-school groups, such as playgroups, playcentres, kindergartens, and day care centres. Once children enter school, teachers plan and organise an extended range of experiences as part of the life of the school. These activities are a continuation of the child's experiences before going to school, and build on them. It is accepted that in such experience lie the roots of meaning—and reading for meaning is basic to the New Zealand style of teaching reading.

The Language of Verbal Exchange—Oral Language Experience

Within the New Zealand curriculum, recognition is given to the fact that language as a means of communication has both verbal and non-verbal forms. Gesture, dance, and pictures are examples of non-verbal language. The language with which teachers are principally concerned in teaching reading, however, is the language of verbal exchange. While such language may occur in both oral and written forms, the child's first contact is with the oral form. This language of oral discourse may vary in many ways. Dialects based on regional, social, and ethnic differences provide one form of variation. Again, different situations or occasions may alter the nature of the oral language used and determine the extent to which more complex or less complex forms prevail. The important point is that underlying the variations is a comprehensive, rule-governed structure. The child, as a result of experiencing language in a growing range of situations in which he or she is personally involved, and possibly because of the increased ease of communication resulting from speaking an occasional word, begins to acquire the rules of language, develops the ability to use these rules, and starts to generate his or her own language. Subsequent use, refinement, and elaboration of this rule-governed structure which underlies and links the variations in language, further increase the child's ability to use language. Such facility with language is likely to have an important bearing on the ease with which the child learns to read, and on the nature of the classroom programme developed by the teacher to promote continuing language growth.

Experiencing Written Language as an Oral Dialect

In a literate society, the young child has an increasing experience with written language, and, through this experience, develops an understanding of its function. By the time most children are enrolled in school, they have experienced print in the form of their name, labels, signs, or notices. Because such print occurs in
12 a real world context which provides meaning, the child begins to appreciate that

ideas represented by oral language can also be represented by print. Conversely, the child also begins to appreciate that print conveys a message. Development of both these concepts is believed to be of fundamental importance for the child who is learning to read.

In addition, most children's oral language experience includes hearing and then reconstructing the forms of language used in books. The opportunity to hear book language occurs as they listen to their favourite stories being read and re-read to them. If, shortly after hearing a story, children are permitted to have the book to themselves, they are likely to reconstruct or recreate the story in increasing similarity to its original form. There are significant similarities and differences between the languages of oral discourse and the languages of books. The similarities, along with illustrations and discussion, enable the child to gain an adequate understanding of what the reader is saying. At the same time, the differences inherent in book language are being built into the child's oral language repertoire. The process is thought to be similar to that which occurs when the parent elaborates the child's early oral language statements. This time, the languages of books as the child hears them probably have the important function of elaborating the child's oral language. In this situation, the languages of books may be considered as another oral dialect, or dialects, which enrich and extend the child's experience of language.

This extension underlines the importance which is attached to the child being read to regularly and often. It is a practice which most New Zealand children are fortunate to have as a recurring, enjoyable experience before coming to school. Following enrolment in school, and for many years subsequently, regular reading to the children by the class teacher, of appropriate, high quality stories is accepted as having continuing benefits. However, independent of the amount of story reading that the child has before going to school, the New Zealand experience is that at varying times within about the first six months at school, most children have a sufficient background of experiences and a sufficient experience of language to have made a good start at learning to read.

Later in this Section, further consideration will be given to the composition of school and classroom programmes likely to promote the continuing development of the listening and speaking aspects of the child's language in association with the development of reading and writing. While the focus will be on learning to read, some emphasis will also be placed on the way children's writing experiences complement their reading experiences in the overall process of language acquisition and development. The features of classroom programmes and the nature of the resources needed to implement them help to exemplify the New Zealand style of teaching reading. Before outlining these, it is appropriate that consideration be given first, to the current understandings in New Zealand of what constitutes the reading process and, second, to the aims of teaching reading in New Zealand.

The Reading Process—Some Beliefs and Observations

Understandings and beliefs about the nature of the reading process have two principal sources. First, they arise out of the experience of teachers working with children in the classroom. Second, they arise from the research studies carried out both in New Zealand and overseas into the acquisition by children of the competencies, skills, and attitudes involved in becoming and being competent readers who enjoy and use reading.

It is considered that reading involves a person processing printed language to obtain the meaning or message intended by the author, and interpreting or reacting to that message in the light of the reader's own experience. It is part of a communication process, and from the reader's standpoint, involves receiving, reconstructing, and understanding a message. The reader brings to the transaction a background of experience, concepts, understandings, and language which provide a base for giving meaning to the text. If what is read is to make sense, it is also vital that the reader has an attitude of demanding meaning. Such an attitude is likely to be fostered when the text is relevant to the child's background of experience and at an appropriate level of difficulty, and when reading is done for a purpose.

The process also involves prediction of what the author intends, selection from among several options, and either confirmation or self-correction of the prediction. This prediction, selection, confirmation, and self-correction process requires that the reader use in some integrated way three major cue systems inherent in language and the reader's use of it.

One is the meaning system, usually called the semantic system. This arises out of the reader's background of experiences, familiarity with the theme of and the concepts used in the passage being read, and the specific context in which the words conveying the message appear. A second cue system is inherent in the child's intuitive understanding (that is, an understanding which is not at a conscious level) of the patterns or rules of language which tend to control the type or class of word which might be expected to come next in a sentence. This cue system is usually referred to as the syntactic system. In its own way it contributes to the semantic system, though some writers would appear to consider it equal in importance to, if not of greater importance than, the semantic system. The third cue system is found in part in the visual nature of the letters, the patterns of letters, the patterns of words, and the writing or printing conventions used in recording a sentence or a series of sentences. It is found in part in the nature of the sounds and the pattern of sounds which make up oral language. It is also found in part in the nature of the relationships linking written and oral forms of language. Collectively, these parts constitute what is usually called the grapho-phonic cue system.

In addition to the integrated use of these three major cue systems, children who are learning to read acquire and use knowledge about the conventional ways language is recorded in books, and about story structure. They develop the ability
14 to perceive and operate on the visual patterns of sentences, words, and letters.

They also develop the ability to hear the sequence of sounds which make up a sentence or a word.

As has already been noted, it is further believed that there are important parallels between the process of acquiring and using language orally and the process of learning to read. Consequently, the latter process is likely to be acquired more readily through the learners' interaction with stories which excite their interest and which they can understand. In the final analysis, it is commonly accepted in New Zealand that one learns to read through reading.

A Statement of Aims

A statement of aims for teaching reading which is likely to find general acceptance among teachers in New Zealand could be:

- to make reading an enjoyable and purposeful task;
- to develop a permanent interest in reading;
- to develop an attitude of demanding meaning—that which is read must make sense;
- to develop independence in reading—that is, to help the child become self-sufficient in monitoring his or her own reading and overcoming difficulties met in extracting a message from the written text, through using in an integrated way appropriate semantic, syntactic, and grapho-phonic cues; and to become self-sufficient in solving problems by locating, evaluating, and organising relevant information;
- to provide the child with, or to enable the child to select, reading materials appropriate to his or her interests and background of experience, range and level of language in its oral forms, and experience with printed language;
- to gain the maximum value for reading, through teaching the child to express ideas in writing as part of a whole-language approach;
- to help the child become a critical reader by interpreting and reacting to the message intended by an author;
- to develop flexibility in adapting the rate of reading to the purpose;
- to bring each child into contact with a variety of books which will enrich and extend his or her experience;
- to increase the child's resourcefulness in using reading to meet everyday needs;
- to develop the skill of reading aloud effectively.

Classroom Programmes in Reading

Some Beliefs and Influences

Underlying school and classroom programmes in New Zealand primary schools are several important beliefs and influences which are of significance to the New Zealand style of teaching reading.

1 Child-centred, psychologically oriented programmes

One important belief is that programmes should be child centred. Some implications of this are that programmes should take into account the level of development, the learning needs, and the interests of each child. Another implication is

that they should be based on the principles and findings of developmental psychology, rather than be based, for example, on an adult analysis of language and reading. Such views greatly influence the type of programme in which children are taught to read, as well as the nature of the reading texts and materials used.

2 Experience, activity and language learning

Another important belief influencing the nature of programmes is that they should be based on the children's experiences and activities. This belief is closely related to the developmental and psychological principle, but arises more particularly from the view of how children learn. Learning is regarded as an active process which takes place as the child interacts physically, emotionally and mentally with objects, situations, and people. In the course of this interaction, the child develops understandings and attitudes, constructs concepts, and acquires and uses language. Along with concepts, language may be regarded as an aspect of experience, a repository and an organiser of experience, and, especially, a vital means of communicating experience. It is therefore regarded as an important function of schools in New Zealand that they develop the child's competence in language—that is, in reading and writing, listening and speaking—through what has become known as a whole language approach. Such an approach is also known in New Zealand as a total language, an integrated language, or a language arts approach. It involves using language in the various forms and styles considered normal or natural to a particular situation, rather than using fragmented pieces of language which are unrelated to and do not naturally arise from, or fit into, that particular situation.

3 Fifth birthday entry

The practice of children starting school when they turn five, has considerable influence on the programmes and organisation of the primary school, particularly at the junior school level, and consequently on the teaching of reading. New Zealand children are entitled to be enrolled in a primary school on their fifth birthday. School enrolment is not compulsory until the child turns six, and in some instances related to the distance of the child's home from a primary school or a school bus route, may be delayed until seven. However, the prevailing custom is that on turning five, or shortly thereafter, children are enrolled by their parents. The result is that there is a continuing flow of five-year olds entering primary schools throughout the school year. This long-established practice has the active support of most teachers, who see it as having many advantages.

The principle advantage is that the teacher of the new entrant has a better chance of treating that child as an individual at this important time than would be possible if groups of children were enrolled at specified times during the year. In helping the child settle into the life of the classroom — a process which may need to be varied considerably from child to child — the teacher is better able to demonstrate acceptance of the child as a person, and to observe closely the child's strengths and weaknesses as he or she engages in the classroom activities. As a result of this sensitive observation, the activities provided to assist the child's continuing development are more likely to be individually tailored to ensure a successful start in learning to read. The practice also provides teachers

with greater flexibility in deciding when to include a child in a teaching group, when to change a child from one group to another, and, in the larger schools, when to change a child from one classroom to another. The length of time spent in junior classes can vary between approximately eighteen months and three or even four years, depending on the child's educational progress and physical, social, and emotional maturity. At the time considered to be in the child's best long-term interests, the child is classified into a standard class where most of the children will be within an age range of approximately twenty-four months. From then on children are normally re-classified annually. They continue on this basis through primary school, and to at least the fifth form in secondary school.

Some Principal Features of Current Practice

1 Developmentally based classroom organisations and practice

For varying periods during their first two or three years at primary school, most children are likely to find themselves in a classroom which provides a variety of learning activities appropriate to their interests and level of development, and where they exercise a considerable amount of self selection. Such a classroom is considered to have a developmental learning environment. The degree to which the programme might be termed developmental depends on the policy of the school, the outlook of the individual teachers, and the assessed nature and learning needs of the children. In some cases, the day might start with a developmental period, and then change to a more formally structured, subject-centred organisation. In other cases, the developmental approach might extend throughout the day. Another aspect of the approach might be seen in the use of themes, where activity and study based on a theme extend over several days or weeks in a classroom, or group of classrooms. Overall, the aim of developmentally oriented programmes is to provide situations and experiences (some of which may be outside the classroom) relevant to the child's interests and level of development, where the child is an active learner. The teacher's task is to plan and organise, to observe sensitively, to share ideas, and to provoke and promote thought and language. At one time the teacher may be working with an individual child, at other times with a group, or the whole class. In such programmes, class activities usually have their place, especially for such purposes as story reading, sharing poems, music making, and physical education. Part of the language orientation, which is a strong feature of most programmes, is the use made of printed messages and captions of various sorts and styles. This practice is one means of making children aware that printed text can record and convey thought and language.

2 The language experience approach

The language experience approach is an important feature of most classroom programmes. It involves using an experience of significance to the child, as a means of generating a statement which is written down and subsequently used for reading. Usually, the child selects some aspect of one experience to paint or draw. After the child and the teacher have discussed the pictured experience, 17

they agree on a statement which the child wants recorded. The teacher may then write down the statement (usually called a caption), directly under the picture, or on a separate piece of paper. During this process, the teacher usually verbalises what is happening, possibly indicating some of the conventions of print, such as where to start, the direction print goes, where a word starts and finishes, use of spaces, the names of words or letters, and punctuation. The teacher and child may then re-read the caption several times, with the child or teacher pointing out features of interest. Depending on the child's stage of development, a statement may vary from one word up to one or more sentences, be an exact version of what the child said or be slightly edited. The child may then trace over the teacher's copy, with or without the teacher's physical assistance, or write directly under the teacher's copy, or transcribe from the separate copy to the picture. At any stage, a child may try to write a statement or part of individual words by himself or herself, seeking assistance as required from the teacher, or from other sources in the room. Class experiences both within and outside the classroom may also result in a class record, which the children can read and re-read. The technique lends itself to considerable variation and adaptation, and provides a valuable opportunity for sensitive observation of individual children by the teacher. The using of children's personal experience as a basis for preparing and recording a written statement, followed by reading and frequent re-reading, are believed to provide vital opportunities for the young child in learning to read and to write. The approach also develops the important concepts that ideas represented by oral language can also be represented by print, and, conversely, that print conveys a message.

3 Shared book experience

Attention has already been drawn to the importance for the child learning to read of having considerable experience of the forms of language which distinguish book language from the language of conversation or discussion. The regular and frequent reading to the children of attractive story books of high literary quality, and with high interest stories in which both children and teacher share pleasure and satisfaction, is therefore another important feature of classroom programmes. The teacher may read to an individual child, to a group of children, or to the whole class. Advantages are believed to accrue to children when they are able to attend to the text at the same time as it is being read. This is typical of when children are sharing bedtime stories, but is more difficult to achieve when normal-sized books are being read to larger groups of children, especially when it is desired that children share the reading of a well-known and favourite story with each other and the teacher. To facilitate shared book experience with groups of children, various techniques have been developed which enable normal sized books to be expanded or "blown-up". These expanded books must replicate the text of the original book, but some latitude is accepted in regard to illustration. Schools have developed relatively low-cost methods of producing these books, so that most junior school classrooms now have ready access to a good supply of "blown-up" books. Commercial publishers have also entered into this field. It is important that, after an expanded book has been used with a group, the children be able to read both expanded and the normal forms of the book themselves or to each other.

It is also important that in each school and classroom there be an ample supply of story books, which children may borrow to take home for shared reading with parents or other adults in the home.

4 A graded series of natural language texts

The time comes when children are ready to be introduced to particular books, which enable them to exercise growing control over the printed text used to convey the message. This readiness is partly a result of the continued development of their oral language abilities and the increasing breadth of their experience with variations in oral language. But it is particularly gained through language experience and book experience activities, which, among other things, help them to relate the oral and printed forms of language. At this stage, the caption book is often used to provide a progression from the caption work done as part of the language experience approach. Caption books repeat a basic sentence pattern, with the illustration providing the main clue to the variation in vocabulary in the one or two line caption appearing on each page. Usually, the next step is for children to progress to specially prepared, natural language texts. One such set of texts is New Zealand's original *Ready to Read* series.

The editor of the *Ready to Read* series, for use with beginning readers during the first two to three years of school, indicated that she considered children were ready to be introduced to such texts when they:

- displayed an interest in books, and were keen to read them;
- were able to relate their own experience to what they were attempting to read;
- were able to discuss what was happening in a story, and were able to discuss what might happen next;
- were able to recognise a number of words in various contexts.

This *Ready to Read* series of graded, natural language texts had been developed in New Zealand, and was introduced to schools in the early 1960s. The series has since formed a vital core in New Zealand for the teaching of reading in whole-language programmes. It had some similarity with previous series, in that it progressively introduced and repeated frequently used words and structures, which form the core of most oral and written language. But even in regard to vocabulary, the series started to depart from previous series. It made greater use of less frequently used "interest" words, which tend to be particular to a story, and carry a major part of the message. While not the only factor, the load of new, interest words usually has a major influence in determining the difficulty of the text for the young reader.

In the teaching of reading, the major shift in the series was away from word recognition and recall to a message-getting orientation. From the first book in the series to the last, the emphasis was on appreciating the story and on comprehending meaning. Children were likely to gain such understanding when the language of the texts was that which they might expect to meet in the course of conversation, and through hearing stories read from readily-available story books. Use of such "natural" language meant that the early books used a larger vocabulary than the average first reader available at that time. The books also used more natural speech, longer sentences, the normal conventions for representing direct and indirect speech in print, and normal punctuation. Greater effort was

made to provide each story with a climax, and to use humour. The aim was to dispense with the unnatural prose of the books traditionally used to introduce young children to reading. Such books frequently depicted children who bore little resemblance to real-life children, and whose speech was not typical of normal children's speech.

5 The innovation of the Little Books

The emphasis on providing a relatively brief but worthwhile story for young children to read, and the successful practice of many infant teachers in helping children to compile their own first reading books, led to another important innovation in the *Ready to Read* series. This was the inclusion of twelve "Little Books". Each consisted of a complete story, and could be used comfortably in one session with a child, or with a group of children. The device also enabled a greater range of families, characters, and incidents to be used than was customary. In this way, the interest of the children was stimulated, and the impact of the books increased. The twelve Little Books were followed by a progression of six readers, each consisting of a miscellany of new and traditional stories. These were chosen and specially written for their quality, relevance to the experiences of most young children, and high impact.

6 Meaning-oriented teaching and learning strategies

Perhaps more important than the materials was the change in approach advocated for their use. Emphasis was placed on reading for meaning and appreciation of the story. Teachers were given guidance on the use of discussion to introduce a story, create interest, and provide appropriate background; on the place of discussion during the reading of a story to predict what might happen next; and especially on using discussion after reading a story to increase understanding, and to appreciate and react to such aspects as the characters, the theme, or the story structure.

Many teachers believed—and had already confirmed through practice—that where children encountered particular words frequently enough, in a variety of meaningful contexts, they would recognise such words on sight, without conscious effort. Previously, words were pre-taught, frequently in isolation, before they were introduced to the children in a graded series of readers. Emphasis was now also placed on developing strategies which would promote independence in overcoming difficulties in identifying an unknown word, through using the context in association with letter-sound relationships. The meaning provided by the story, the illustrations, the sentence, and the child's own background of experience and language helps the child to predict a word which makes sense. Use of the child's knowledge of letter names and sound-to-letter or letter-to-sound associations, particularly those relating to the initial consonant, helps to limit the number of acceptable predictions and to verify predictions. Rather than pre-teach words, teachers were urged to let teaching points arise from the children's reading of stories, and to use a small blackboard, or sheet of paper pinned to a board, to carry out such teaching. Providing it did not unduly impede the story flow and interrupt the message-getting process, such teaching might be done in the course of reading, but more frequently at the conclusion of the story or at
20 a suitable break in the story. The process emphasised the importance of sensitive

observation and interpretation of each child's reading behaviour. The aim has been to promote children's independence in overcoming their difficulties, by helping them to develop meaning-oriented strategies.

7 Easy reading—wide reading

One important purpose of the graded, natural language *Ready to Read* series produced in the early 1960s was to ensure that children had access to a core of material which was easy enough to make possible the use of contextual and grapho-phonic cues, while meeting a manageable range of challenges. Another was to provide a baseline for establishing the difficulty level of other available, suitable reading material. There was no intention that the reading programme be thought of in terms of one basic series or set of supplementary readers planned specifically for use with that series. Emphasis was placed on there being available a wide range of stories which used different language styles and story styles and which were able to be matched approximately to the various difficulty levels of the core series. It was recognised that individual children have varying interests and styles of learning. Wide reading at an appropriate level of difficulty was intended to cater for these points, as well as providing necessary enjoyable and successful practice. There was acceptance of the truism that children learn to read by reading.

The more children read material they can enjoy with little difficulty, the more they are likely to develop their reading competencies and to have positive attitudes towards reading. This emphasis on easy, wide reading continues to be a feature of the New Zealand style. Private publishers responded extremely well to the Department's invitation to produce books with stories which supplemented and complemented the aims and content of the *Ready to Read* series. The Department of Education, after consultation with advisers to schools and experienced junior class teachers, has published a classified list of books set out in levels related to the *Ready to Read* series. This publication, *Books for Junior Classes*, has proved helpful to schools in classifying their available materials and in developing a balanced policy for the purchase of additional supplementary books. It has been revised several times in the light of further experience with the available books, and as new and better material has been published.

Research, Reading Recovery, and a Three-Wave Approach

About the time of the introduction of the new series in 1962, Mrs (now Dr) Marie Clay began a longitudinal study of a representative Auckland sample of a hundred five-year-old new entrants to primary schools. Her aim was to observe these children closely, and to record exactly what they were learning during their first year at school. Dr Clay's interest in such research has continued up to the present day, with a number of very important results for the teaching of reading in New Zealand. It has demonstrated on an independent research basis that the *Ready to Read* series and the philosophies and teaching methods associated with its use can be effective in teaching children to read. Several important insights

inherent in the approach have been highlighted. These include: the positive, reciprocal effects that learning to read and learning to write have on each other; the significance of children's self-correction behaviour; and the knowledge and behaviours which have to be learned relating to the conventions of print and the use of written language. Her research has also provided a number of tools and techniques which help teachers to refine their observation and to make more sensitive their interpretation of children's reading behaviours. One tool, called the running record, requires the teacher to note down in detail a child's responses when reading a selected passage. An example of an important technique is the place of both finger and voice pointing at certain stages while learning to read.

Experience prior and subsequent to the introduction of the original *Ready to Read* series has demonstrated that while most children succeed in learning to read by means of the mainstream approach, not all do so with equal facility, and some are relatively unsuccessful. Dr Clay's researches, and subsequent work with teachers and reading specialists, have resulted in the development of a range of diagnostic and recovery procedures. These procedures and techniques have been aimed in the first instance at determining as precisely as possible the reading behaviours of children having difficulty within their first year at school. The procedures and techniques are then used to overcome these difficulties, accelerating the children's progress by means of an individualised, tutoring approach, so that they can succeed and progress normally in the customary classroom programme. These procedures, usually referred to as "Reading Recovery", have been set out in the second edition of Dr Clay's publication, *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties*, sub-titled "A Diagnostic Survey with Recovery Procedures".

Where, after six months at school, a child does not appear to be coming to grips with learning to read, Dr Clay has recommended that the teacher should intensify observation of and work with the child, so that he or she does not practise inappropriate reading behaviour. Dr Clay has further recommended that after children have been one year at school, they should be given the full diagnostic survey, a practice which fifth birthday entry makes manageable in most schools. The detailed recovery procedures would then be applied to from ten to twenty percent of the children making the slowest progress in a particular school. An intensive tutor-training programme in recent years has enabled the application of the recovery procedures in all ten education board districts, though not necessarily in all schools. If the normal programme—through which eighty to ninety percent of children make a successful start in learning to read—is considered as the first-wave approach, the diagnostic and recovery procedures for children meeting difficulty can be considered as a second-wave approach.

A small number of children (about two percent) have problems of such complexity that they are unlikely to become competent readers even after the school uses the detailed diagnostic survey, and the intensive, individually tutored, recovery procedures. Such children require the assistance of highly trained clinical specialists, such as resource teachers of reading and educational psychologists of the Psychological Service of the Department of Education. As appropriate, a psychologist may call in other specialists in diagnosing problems and in advising on the subsequent steps needed to help these children. This constitutes a third-wave approach to achieving the goal of assisting all children to become readers.

The development of the three-wave approach has become an important feature of the New Zealand style of teaching reading over the first two or three years of the primary school. In addition, special programmes and procedures for readers having difficulty are mounted throughout all levels of the school system. In recent years a network of adult literacy programmes, which arrange individual tutoring for adults seeking assistance with reading and writing, has completed the coverage of reading assistance measures. It is expected that as the preventive and recovery effects of the three-wave approach in the early years begin to be felt, the need for such additional measures in later years will be reduced.

Resources : People and Materials

The New Zealand style of teaching reading recognises that if children are to be taught to become effective and efficient readers, a wide range of resources is needed. Many resources are in fact available.

The prime resource has been, and will continue to be, the teacher in the classroom. To be successful, teachers of reading need to be well informed on:

- how children develop and learn as individuals and as members of a group in a social setting;
- the nature of language and how children acquire and use it;
- the nature of the reading process and the competencies and attitudes children need to develop in acquiring it.

They also need:

- to have the ability to develop objectives, and to devise programmes in order to meet them;
- to be sensitive observers of children who are learning and reading, that is, they can at times stop teaching and observe what children actually do without assistance;
- to be able to develop an environment where children feel secure enough to take risks.

Finally, as the main decision makers in the classroom, they must have the ability to make well informed decisions about:

- the learning environment;
- the appropriate materials to be used;
- the strategies and attitudes to be developed to help children become self-sufficient, self-improving learners and readers;
- when it is appropriate to intervene in the children's activities, and when to leave them using their own resources.

Pre-service programmes have been developed in teachers' colleges to help teachers in training to develop these qualities to the level which will enable them to be effective in the classroom. At the same time it is recognised that the task is by no means completed when teachers have achieved the minimum competencies which qualify them for certification. Consequently, an extensive network of school based and out-of-school based in-service courses, as well as correspondence type study courses run by the Department's Advanced Studies

for Teachers Unit, and university courses, have been organised to assist all teachers in developing their understandings and in sharpening their teaching techniques. The adaptation of in-service training programmes to support the teaching of reading is more fully developed in Part Five.

Also available to support schools and teachers are various advisory services and consultative resources. These include advisers to junior classes, advisers on reading, advisers to rural schools, inspectors of schools, psychologists, speech therapists, resource teachers in reading, part-time teachers, and reading recovery teachers, as well as teachers' college and university staff. A very positive resource has been the International Reading Association, which provides a forum for discussion, and a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas, among a wide range of people interested in teaching reading. Local councils of the International Reading Association arrange programmes of meetings throughout the year, while national conferences held annually attract overseas experts interested in the New Zealand experience and able to contribute information about developments in overseas thinking. Special interest organisations also make a contribution, while, within the schools, organising librarians from the School Library Service of the National Library Service advise on the range of books available, and assist in the organisation of school and classroom libraries. An increasing number of schools is making use of parent volunteers, who can be particularly helpful with certain aspects of the language and reading programmes in junior classes.

Material resources of various kinds are also supplied to schools. In addition to the *Ready to Read* books and materials, the four parts of the *School Journal*, together with special issues, are supplied free to schools, though most of these, as well as bulletins, are more appropriate for standard class children. Schools also receive grants which may be used to buy additional books to support the reading programme, while locally raised funds are frequently used in a similar manner. For many schools, the School Library Service provides a steady supply of high quality children's literature and resource books. Audio and visual resources, such as film strips and films, tape cassettes, slides, and transparencies, supplied or purchased through the Department's National Film Library or the Department's Visual Production Unit, are also available to support, where appropriate, schools and teachers in the teaching of reading. An increasing number of schools also has access to visual reproduction resources, such as thermal copiers and duplicators.

Teachers' handbooks and guidelines and, more recently, special teachers' editions of some pupils' books, have been supplied by the Department, and have proved an invaluable resource for teachers' private study, and as a basis for discussion at school staff meetings and in-service courses. Resources to assist in informing parents and encouraging their support have also been available in the form of specially written pamphlets and films.

An example of a useful publication from outside the school system is the booklet *Going to School*. This arose out of a research project by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research on transition from home to school, and was published by the Council.

An innovation which was developed by the Department in co-operation with Radio New Zealand, took the form of a series of radio programmes entitled *On the Way to Reading*. Special features of this project involved the establishing of

listening and discussion groups of parents who were provided with a set of free back-up books of the same title.

Two specially designed audio-visual in-service programmes for teachers, called the "Early Reading In-Service Course" (ERIC) and the "Later Reading In-Service Course" (LARIC), are given fuller attention in Part Five.

Evaluation and Monitoring of Programmes and Progress

A feature of teaching reading in New Zealand throughout the school system, and especially in junior classes, has been the monitoring of children's progress. The *Handbook of Suggestions for Teaching Reading in Infant Classes*, which was introduced along with the *Ready to Read* series in the early 1960s, emphasised the need for sensitive observation of children while they are reading, and the basing of teaching decisions on such monitoring. As noted above, subsequent research led to the development of insights and the provision of information which have enabled teachers to make teaching decisions on a better informed basis than before. Mention has also been made of observation tools, such as the running record developed by Dr Clay and readily accepted by teachers. These tools are a means of sharpening their observations and enabling them to probe more deeply and sensitively into the processes children are using to comprehend the message being conveyed by the text.

The main advantage of a graded series of beginning readers is that, when well used, it provides a manageable progression of challenges to children. It also provides a yardstick by which teachers may measure children's progress against their time at school and their general level of ability. For instructional purposes, and for the placement of children in groups within classes and in classes within the school, teachers must make well-informed decisions. Because of the importance of these decisions, teachers keep records of children's progress, which are used when the children are being placed in classes. These decisions are usually made by a team of teachers who have been associated with the child and the class over a period of time, rather than by one teacher.

Parents have an important place in the evaluation process. In addition to their natural interest in the progress of their children, they have a right to be informed. In many cases, there are frequent informal contacts between parents and teachers, when information helpful to the well-being of the child, and to both parents and teachers can be exchanged. Most schools also arrange for occasions, usually about the middle of the year and towards the end of the year, when parents are informed of the progress of their children. This frequently involves a discussion between the parents and the child's class teacher, and is usually backed up by a written report to the parents.

Standardised tests are used in many schools to supplement and back up the evaluative judgements made as a result of, or in the course of, teachers' sensitive observation of the children's learning behaviour. Standardised observation and assessment instruments are associated with the Clay Diagnostic Survey at the

six-year-old level. More are available to teachers of older children, and include reading tests of the "Progressive Achievement Test" series (PAT) developed by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

The collection of a comprehensive range of information enables better informed decisions to be made about the quality of classroom and school programmes and the effectiveness of the materials used to implement them. While teachers have day-to-day responsibility for what occurs in their classrooms, principals have overall responsibility for the quality of the work in their schools. Principals, with the help of senior teachers who may have delegated responsibility for various groups of classes within the school, evaluate programmes, and, twice a year, prepare written reports on the work of the school. As a result of these evaluations, they are likely to determine the nature of the professional development programmes that are arranged in consultation with the staff, and to call in whatever outside resource people they consider appropriate to assist in meeting their goals.

Members of the inspectorate also visit schools to evaluate programmes, teaching methods, and the use of materials. Such visits may frequently be in association with the supporting of beginning teachers, and in deciding on their certification; be in response to a teacher's application for a personal report which will be used in applying for positions of responsibility; or be in relation to the statutory obligation to carry out school inspections at three-yearly intervals. As a result of such constant contact with the work of the schools, district senior inspectors are able to comment on the effectiveness of syllabuses and support materials, such as text books and reading materials, when regular conferences are held with their colleagues and senior officers in head office of the Department. The Director-General reports annually to the Minister of Education on the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. This report is tabled in Parliament, and sections of it may be the substance of debate when financial appropriations are under consideration.

This complex system of monitoring and evaluation within the school system stimulates and supports the teaching of reading, provides a structure of checks and balances, and, in its own way, contributes to the national system of teaching reading and the development and identification of a New Zealand style.

Summary of the Distinctive Features of the New Zealand Style

This paper has set out features of teaching reading in New Zealand schools which in various ways contribute to the New Zealand style of teaching reading. The focus has been on the first two or three years of primary schooling. A brief summary follows.

The New Zealand style of teaching reading recognises that:

- Teachers are conscious of the strong expectations of parents and others in the community that children will be taught to read well—parents and others are aware that the ability to read well will influence their children's lifestyle and life chances in a literate society.

- On starting school at five years of age, children have had a range of experiences in and outside their homes, and in a variety of situations. These usually include experiences at pre-schools, with people, and with language in a variety of oral and written styles and forms. Such experiences form the basis for an approach to teaching reading which has the comprehension of the meaning intended by the author as its over-riding concern.
- Children in all their variety are to be accepted with no value judgements, and with further development through classroom programmes proceeding from that basis—the quality of the teacher-child relationship is of vital importance.
- Reading is a significant part of a whole language approach, which includes listening, speaking, and writing, and in which children use language in purposeful situations to satisfy their needs.
- Learning to write in such a programme has an important reciprocal effect on learning to read.
- Children learn to read by reading stories which they are able to relate to, which are interesting and use natural fluent prose, and which fall within their background of oral language experience.
- Texts must be easy enough, that is, the difficulty level must be matched to the purpose, interests, and competencies of the pupils.
- A graded series of natural language texts forms a vital core to the reading programme of most teachers of junior classes.
- In addition, a wide range of interesting reading materials at appropriate levels of difficulty must be readily available to provide enjoyable, successful reading, and to allow for individual differences in interest, background and competence.
- In the course of reading interesting, natural language texts, children must be helped to develop an integrated set of learning and comprehension strategies if they are to become self-monitoring, self-correcting, self-improving, independent readers.
- From the beginning there must be an emphasis on the child comprehending the meaning intended by the author.
- Teaching points arise out of or in the course of reading natural language texts. Understanding the story has priority—teaching points follow.
- Given appropriate stimulation and guidance, and appropriate reading material, all children can succeed in learning to read.
- For some children, special measures, which are part of a three-wave approach, are necessary to promote success in learning to read.
- There is no substitute for the well-educated, well-prepared teacher who, as a teacher of reading: understands and can use a variety of approaches to teaching reading; has a positive acceptance of children as they are; has a positive belief in children as intelligent, developing beings; has empathy with children as learners; can, at appropriate times, withdraw from the teaching role and become a sensitive observer of children's reading behaviour; and can make appropriate decisions in regard to the provision of

materials, programmes, and techniques to ensure the continuing success and development of the child as a reader.

- To accomplish their task successfully, teachers of reading must be supported with a wide range of resources, both human and material, and by the provision of a variety of opportunities for in-service training and continuing study.
- The maintenance of standards and continued improvement in the teaching of reading have been, and will be, assisted by a wide range of self-monitoring, by evaluation both inside and from outside the school, by research, and by development procedures.
- As parents have a vital role to play both in the home and in the school, the continued development of parental co-operation and understanding is important.
- The process of learning to read more effectively, more efficiently, and with greater satisfaction continues through childhood into the adult years.

Part Three The New Zealand School Publications Branch

Purpose of the Branch

The School Publications Branch of the New Zealand Department of Education is a section of the Resources Development Division which complements and supports the Curriculum Development Division. Both divisions are responsible, through the Director Curriculum Development and the Assistant Secretary Schools and Development, to the Director-General of Education and the Minister of Education. The Branch specialises in preparing and publishing textbooks and related materials for use in the school system, and also acts as the publishing arm of the Department. It aims to turn out publications that in substance and presentation are exemplary of the Department's educational purposes and philosophy, and to encourage their effective use in schools. It also ensures that the textbooks and reading materials it produces are appropriate to New Zealand conditions, and that they support both the introduction of new syllabuses and the continuing implementation of existing syllabuses throughout the school system.

Background to the Establishment of the Branch

The New Zealand School Publications Branch was established in 1939, and incorporated the *School Journal*, which the Department had been publishing since 1907. It was born largely as a result of the upsurge in educational thinking and the quickening pace of curriculum change which followed the world wide depression of the 1930s. These influences and changes affected New Zealand as much as they did many other countries throughout the world. One outcome for New Zealand was the production of a set of new syllabuses. These set out a

knowledge content intended to reflect more directly the needs and interests of New Zealand children. The methods advocated for their implementation reflected more strongly than before convictions about the need for children to be actively involved in their learning. The changes intensified the demand for additional teaching resources, especially printed resources, which would support more adequately the new syllabuses and approaches. At the same time, because of the relatively mobile nature of New Zealand's population and the teaching force, there was a demand, especially from parents and to some extent from teachers, for greater uniformity in the basic texts used by schools throughout the country. Different texts used by different school authorities tended to produce discontinuities for mobile children and teachers, while the purchase of a new set of texts was an expense considered avoidable by many parents and teachers in a community still recovering from a depression.

A textbook committee consisting of the Director of Education, the Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, and two representatives of the primary teachers' organisation was set up in 1936, to consider the whole position. In doing so, it addressed two further issues. The first was who was to publish the new materials. The small scale of the private publishing industry at that time, the commercial risks involved in producing relatively small runs with no guarantee of sales, and the amount of professional assistance which would be needed from the Department itself in producing appropriate texts, pointed to the Department carrying out the task. The second was the cost to parents of texts in a system which by legislation was compulsory, secular, and free, but which in fact faced parents with a compulsory expenditure on most texts. The successful precedent of the *School Journal* again pointed to the required texts being more economically produced by the Department and printed by the Government Printing Office. The government of the day was persuaded to accept the recommendations of the committee, and as a result the New Zealand School Publications Branch commenced operations on 1 February 1939.

Several conditions were considered to be of particular importance in establishing and developing a good school publications programme. Primacy was given to the appointment of high quality staff. Second, the Branch must have a sense of purpose and direction provided by an alive and moving school system. Third, the staff must have freedom to work and to determine content within a system of checks and balances. Fourth, chosen writers must be authorities in their subjects and be able to work with editorial staff on appropriate presentation of material. Fifth, there must be a constant insistence on high standards by all involved. The final condition—sincerity—was seen as a condition of all good teaching, and required the skills and attitudes needed to say something to the child with no hint of condescension. These conditions which guided the Branch during its formative years have continued to influence its operation since.

Structure and Functions of the Branch

Over the forty-four years of the Branch's existence, changes have been made in its structure which reflect the changing needs of the education system and changes in the organisation of the Department.

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Responsibility for the management of the Branch rests with an Education Officer (Publications). The work of the Branch is carried out by a core of editorial and administrative officers, with the numbers varying from time to time according to professional and administrative requirements. This core of permanent staff is supplemented by the appointment of editors on contract for finite tasks, by the secondment of suitable people (usually from within the school system), and by contracting work out.

The following permanent positions were functioning in July 1983:

Education Officer (Publications)

Chief Editor	Chief Art Editor
Editor *School Journals* Parts 1 and 2	Art Editors (4)
Editor *School Journals* Parts 3 and 4	Administrative Officer
Editor Curriculum-Related Publications for Students	Gazette Clerk Senior Clerk
Editors (2) Publications for Teachers	Clerk
Editor Publications in Māori	Office Assistant
Editor *Education Gazette*	

In addition, there were an editor and an art editor on contract to the mathematics textbooks project, and an experienced teacher of junior classes seconded from a primary school as editor to the *Ready to Read* project.

The task of an editor can perhaps be best summarised as making sure that the author's intention is clear to readers. To accomplish this, an editor must have a clear understanding of the purpose of a publication, the client group who will read and work with the text, the ways in which the content may be presented, whether the basic material for a text is already available or will have to be commissioned, and, in the latter case, the writers who might be approached to carry out the task. One example of the editorial process is set out in some detail in Part Four, "The *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project".

The task of an art editor might best be summarised as making sure that the author's intention and that of the publication generally are conveyed and enhanced by visual means. The art editor works closely with the editor in establishing the purpose of both the publication and the author, in designing the format of the publication, and in determining the ways in which illustration will enhance the text and the publication. The art editor also works in with the editor in selecting illustrators and commissioning artists, and in selecting the kind and size of type face. Other vital tasks for the art editor are arranging for the printing, and supervising the quality of the work during the various phases of publication.

The administrative staff assist the editors with such functions as the payment of contributors and the recording and monitoring of expenditure. They are responsible for handling returns from schools and other educational institutions which provide a quantity planning base and form the basis of distribution. They also supervise storage and distribution.

A further function of all categories of staff within the Branch is to establish and maintain liaison with other sections and staff in the Department involved in the production or distribution of other resources for learning. These sections

are the National Film Library, the Visual Production Unit, the Audio Production Unit, and the School Library Service. A further section, the Computer Courseware Development Unit, is to be set up in 1984. The growing range of resources produced by these groups has increased the need to co-ordinate planning, while the availability of a particular resource can have direct implications for the content and format of materials being developed for an associated purpose. A relatively recent development has been the combined planning and production of multi-media resource kits made up of printed materials, still, and moving visual materials, audio materials, and various combinations of these.

Staff Recruitment and Training

With its close involvement in the work of schools, the Branch has traditionally recruited most of its staff from the ranks of teachers. When recruiting editors, the Branch looks for people who have an education to a university standard, experience in teaching, and experience in writing and or editing. As a combination of experience in teaching and editing is not common in the general population, it is customary for an applicant's aptitude for editing to be tested through an assignment. In recruiting art editors, the Branch looks for people with formal qualifications in fine arts and graphic design, and with experience in illustration and design work. Teaching experience enhances an applicant's prospects for the work. Again, aptitude for the specialised business of art editing for educational purposes is tested through an assignment.

Staff training focuses on the special requirements of educational publishing, in particular those of publishing for children. There is no other available source for such training in New Zealand, apart from what other educational publishers might be able to provide for their staffs. The Branch relies to a great extent on the teaching experience available in the Branch for the application of editing skills to educational publishing. The chief editor and the chief art editor have direct responsibility for the training of their respective staffs. Regular staff meetings provide another vehicle for staff training. Frequently, a particular publication will be evaluated at a staff meeting, a procedure which staff find valuable in establishing, maintaining, and improving the quality of the work of the Branch. Involvement in the work of other educational specialists, visits to schools, in-service courses, and refresher courses (usually held in holiday periods under the auspices of the Teachers' Refresher Course Committee), and attendance at conferences, also contribute to staff training.

Kinds of Publishing Activities

The Branch carries out three broad kinds of publishing activities. These are textbooks and other publications for students, publications for teachers, and publications for the education service, educationists, and the general public.

Publications for Students

The *School Journal* is a magazine for New Zealand school children. Established in 1907, it is the most longstanding of the Department's student publications, and is distributed free to all schools in New Zealand. A miscellany of fiction and non-fiction, its intention is to provide material for children to read and enjoy for themselves.

After initial use as a magazine, *Journals* are retained in schools as a resource for subsequent interest and recreational reading by individuals, for guided silent reading lessons, to provide background material for social studies and science topics, for poetry and play reading, and reading related to classroom themes and centres of interest. The Branch has published the *School Journal Catalogue 1965–81* to assist teachers and pupils in making more efficient use of the *School Journal* as a resource.

The *School Journal* is published regularly in four separate parts. Part One is intended primarily for Standard 1 children, Part Two for Standard 2, Part 3 for Standards 3 and 4, and Part 4 for Forms 1 and 2. The publication celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1982, and to mark this, the Branch produced two special books. One was a special edition of the *School Journal* explaining to children of approximately seven to nine years of age the procedures involved in compiling, publishing and printing a journal. It provides an interesting example of how a complex topic is developed for children. The other was a special edition of the magazine *Education*, a publication intended mainly for teachers.

The Branch has two major free textbook projects. One is the *Ready to Read* series, the revision and extension of which is the topic of Section D. The other is the primary mathematics project, which entails the provision of a basic set of mathematics resources for all levels of the primary school.

In addition, the Branch produces various curriculum-related publications for students. These offer an extended treatment of a topic for classroom purposes, published either as booklets or in kitsets of printed material in various forms.

To support the teaching of Maori in schools, the Branch provides various publications in the Maori language. A further aim of these publications is to foster the development of additional material in Maori by private publishers.

Publications for Teachers

Publications provided free for teachers include syllabuses, handbooks of suggestions, teachers' editions of some pupils' texts, and curriculum development materials of national importance. They may state the aims to be achieved, the content to be covered or from which selections may be made, provide guidelines on how topics may be developed, make suggestions on teaching methods and the use of resources, and give practical guidance on the needs of special groups in schools or matters relating to school management.

Publications for the Education Service, Educationists and the General Public

The *Education Gazette* is published twenty-three times a year, and is provided free to all educational institutions. As the official organ of the Department of

Education, it carries official notices, provides educational information of national importance, and advertises teaching and other vacancies in most educational institutions. Names of successful applicants are also published from time to time.

From 1948 to 1982 the Department has published a magazine for teachers called *Education*. This has usually consisted of a miscellany of articles of interest to teachers and educationists but from time to time whole issues have been devoted to a particular theme. On two occasions since its inception, publication of the magazine has been suspended as part of economy measures by the government of the day.

In addition, occasional reports, discussion documents, newsletters, and pamphlets for parents are published by the Branch. These contribute to the dissemination of information or the promotion of debate on particular issues in education.

Planning and Policies Relating to the Provision of Textbooks and Materials

Assessing Needs in Relation to Policy

The stimulus for a new textbook usually arises out of a consensus of opinion by a group associated with a particular curriculum development project, or the review of some aspect of the curriculum. Such groups may have been officially set up by the Department with the approval of the Minister, or be associated with a particular interest group, such as a teachers' organisation, a subject organisation, a school staff, an in-service or refresher course, a group of departmental officers, or a community organisation or interest group. It is a function of the Curriculum Development Division, in co-operation with other divisions of the Department, to collate and appraise such suggestions, with a view to determining which may be justified and what priority should be given to them. In doing so, they may take into account those aspects of the curriculum to which priority is currently being given, the availability of alternative publications both from within and outside the school system, and the quality and relevance of texts currently being used. They also take into account their appropriateness in meeting the assessed needs of the pupils for whom they are intended, and their appropriateness in today's social and cultural climate. Special attention would also be given to the policies of the government of the day, and to any directions given by the Minister or to matters in which he had taken a particular interest. In the course of each year, specific proposals may have been considered by the Minister or the Cabinet, and decisions at these levels would have special significance for publications' policy. The effects of such policy decisions might have a particular influence on the nature of the publishing programme for several years. Because of factors such as these, the period from the time a new publication was first suggested, to the time a commitment is made to undertake publication, and then to its availability in the classroom, may extend over several years.

Arranging a Publishing Programme

Each financial year, a publishing programme is drawn up. The process and the
34 programme must take into account: the various steps in the Government's budget

cycle; the finance likely to be available, and, at a later stage, the finance actually approved; the editorial resources available in the School Publications Branch; the flow of work, which is in part controlled by the productivity of writers, artists, and editors; and the capacity of the printers to undertake the required work within specified deadlines. Hold-ups in some projects may enable the commitment to spend money on other projects to be speeded up, but the aim is to have sufficient work of high priority "in the pipeline" to ensure that financial allocations are spent. Each year, each item in the publishing programme is reviewed in order to assess its continued justification, and its priority in relation to new projects and the available finance. The substance of this programme may have to be modified subsequently in the light of the final approved financial allocations and the work flow. Such an approach means the staff of the Branch and of the Curriculum Development Division must constantly keep under review the progress being made on the preparation of resources such as textbooks and reading materials.

"The *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project", Part Four, provides a case study, within the general framework outlined above, on the planning of a series of texts, the preparation, testing, and evaluation of manuscripts for the texts and reading materials, and the publishing and printing of the series.

Storage and Distribution

The School Publications Branch has responsibility for arranging for the storage and distribution of texts as they are printed. Depending on the nature of the publication, different procedures may be involved, but, where possible, when publications are intended for pupils' use in primary schools, arrangements are made for the printer to consign bulk lots to each education board store. There the storemen break down the bulk lots and prepare packages for consignment to each school in accordance with a pre-arranged schedule. The education boards arrange distribution to schools in the most economical way possible.

The Branch, in determining the quantities for each printing run, takes account of foreseeable demands for new schools and essential replacements over the next few years, so that there is a reasonable period of time between reprintings of a text, should these be warranted. This reserve of stock may be stored centrally and distributed as required, or held in education board stores and distributed from there as justified. Particular decisions may be related to the bulk of the text or materials and the amount of space likely to be available in the board stores.

Effective Utilisation and Summative Evaluation

The Branch's main means of encouraging the effective use of the texts and reading materials it produces lies in the quality of each publication. With pupils' texts such a view would imply: that full account has been taken of the purpose

of a text; that there has been a proper appreciation of the student group for whom it is intended; that there has been insightful, sincere writing of the text; that there has been expert and sensitive editing; and that there has been imaginative and sympathetic handling of the illustration, layout, and general format, with expert, high-quality printing to ensure that the publication is both attractive and easy to handle.

Within the constraints of available time and finance, editorial staff will have been checking their appreciation of the nature of the publication, through consultation with, for example, individual teachers, teachers' groups, advisers, and education officers, and by trying out drafts with children. Consultation within the Branch, and checks with appropriate curriculum officers and approving officers at various stages of the preparation and production of the publication, help to ensure that the accumulated knowledge and experience of the Department are brought to bear in ensuring the quality which encourages effective use.

Once the publication is in use, editors take whatever opportunities may be available to them to check on its effectiveness. The information gained is discussed with colleagues and built into the background of experience of individual editors and the Branch, and applied to the preparation and publication of future texts and materials. Reference has already been made to the network of educational organisations and structures which, along with individuals, produces a continuing flow of information and opinion on the effectiveness of publications collectively and individually.

Individual teachers continue to exercise a key role on what occurs in the classroom, and consequently on the effective use of textbooks and reading materials in supporting and providing learning experiences. Reference has been made to the network of support structures and services for teachers and schools. This has an important influence on the effective use of textbooks, and contributes substantially to the making of judgements about the worth of a publication. The pre-service training and, more particularly, the in-service training of teachers play a similar role especially in regard to effective use of texts. Part Five is devoted to this topic.

Part Four The *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project

Early Approaches in New Zealand to Teaching Reading at Beginning Levels

The nature of the materials, not to mention the methods, to be used in teaching young children to read has been a matter of continuing concern from the early days of European settlement in New Zealand. Historical accounts suggest that prior to the 1870s most reading materials for children starting school tended to be of a religious nature, and the Bible is sometimes mentioned as the book used. During the early 1870s, publishers began producing graded readers in England, and by the late 1870s Nelson's *Royal Readers* and Collin's *Readers*, both published in six parts, were reported to be in fairly general use in New Zealand schools. The six parts corresponded to the six standard classes of the primary schools but primer and infant readers were provided for children during their first two years at school.

A New Zealand firm, Whitcombe and Tombs, entered the field as early as 1888, and by the mid-1890s was producing primer readers largely patterned on the *Royal Readers*. These books started with the letters of the alphabet, progressed to two letter words, then to three letter words of one syllable, and then to words of one syllable which might be of more than three letters. Reading methods advocated included the alphabetic, the phonic, and the syllabic, but it usually took considerable mental effort, even by adults, to extract meaning from the lists of words which were strung together and purported to tell a story. In the next fifty years, publishers in New Zealand and overseas attempted to improve their readers. For some periods, overseas series found favour in New Zealand schools and at other stages the available Whitcombe series received support. However, teachers continued to express concern with the quality of the readers and their effectiveness in teaching young children to read.

The *Janet and John* Series

In 1949, the acceptance of a recommendation by a committee which had worked on a revision of the infant reading syllabus resulted in the introduction over the next few years of the *Janet and John* series for general use in New Zealand schools. These books were an English adaptation of the American *Alice and Jerry* infant readers, and were further adapted by the English publishers in consultation with members of the syllabus revision committee and officers of the Department of Education. An introductory book and two transition books were added to the four books of the English series which, in turn, were slightly adapted to give a more gradual progression in vocabulary and to provide more appropriate illustrations. The resultant seven-book series was purchased by the New Zealand Government, and, along with a manual, *Reading in the Infant Room*, was distributed free to all schools.

The new books, planned according to principles of interest, controlled vocabulary, and vivid presentation, were a considerable advance on what was previously available. Another positive development was the provision of supplementary readers associated with the more advanced books in the series. Commercial publishers also prepared supplementary readers. In the course of the 1950s, however, teachers found that the heavy emphasis on vocabulary acquisition, including the teaching of words prior to their introduction in a story with a view to preventing failure, tended to produce dependent readers with inadequate strategies for overcoming difficulties met in the course of reading other material. There was also dissatisfaction with the quality of the stories, particularly at the early levels, and with the nature of the child characters portrayed and family qualities depicted. By 1959, a large reprint had become necessary. The high cost of this, despite the fact that the books were being printed in New Zealand, along with the criticisms, caused the Government to ask whether it would not be more appropriate for the School Publications Branch to produce a New Zealand series. The Department's affirmative response to this question resulted in the preparation and production of the *Ready to Read* series.

The *Ready to Read* Series

The Department of Education appointed an experienced teacher and inspector of schools, Miss M.M. Simpson, to supervise the task of developing the new series, and to work with the chief editor of the School Publications Branch in editing the books. Before any material was prepared, discussions were held in many parts of New Zealand with groups of junior class teachers, advisers, inspectors, teachers' college and university lecturers, and groups associated with the primary teachers' organisation. From these and subsequent discussions emerged the general shape and features of the series. Twelve sixteen-page books, each containing eight pages of text and eight full page illustrations, and six readers would make up the series. Use of interest vocabulary was intended to make possible the creation of stories with some attempt at climax, even in the first
38 books, and, where appropriate, humour, as well as text which would be more

natural and fluent. Because boys usually make up the greater proportion of children having difficulty in learning to read, a special attempt was to be made to provide stories which would be more likely to hold their interest. As the material was prepared, it was discussed, as appropriate, with the above-named groups, and tried out, usually without illustrations, in three selected schools in each of the ten education board districts and the Maori Schools Service—a total of thirty-three schools.

In its final form the material was designed to:

- offer a series of stories and books which would provide a steady progression of difficulty for the teaching of reading to young children;
- include New Zealand content;
- present stories close to the children's experiences;
- enable children to make use of context;
- contain stories to be read at one sitting;
- include language New Zealand children would naturally experience in conversation and in the course of having stories read to them;
- provide a national series;
- provide models for publishers.

An important adjunct to the series was a handbook of suggestions for teaching reading in infant classes, prepared by Miss Simpson, and published in 1962. (The term "infant classes" has now generally been replaced by "junior classes".) In the handbook, frequent references were made to another set of three teachers' handbooks, published by the Department of Education in 1961 and 1962, supporting the newly introduced syllabus for teaching English in primary schools. About the same time, other new syllabuses, with supporting handbooks, were being introduced in subjects such as art and craft, social studies, and arithmetic, all of which had their impact on the junior classes of the primary school. To assist with the many innovations associated with these new syllabuses, a major re-organisation and strengthening of the advisory services took place. An increase in the number of advisers to junior classes enabled a series of in-service courses to be held, and closer support to be given to junior school teachers and schools, particularly in teaching reading, language and mathematics in junior classes.

As teachers gained experience with the new reading materials and with the recommended classroom organisation and methods, the materials were found to be effective in developing children's reading abilities. At the same time, teachers began to note ways in which the series could be improved. The Department started to receive reports from courses and conferences of teachers, advisers, and inspectors. These generally supported the series, but also noted inadequacies and made suggestions for improvement. With the passage of time and changing community values, the series started to become dated. Some teachers were also reported to be finding it restrictive. The outcome was that during 1975 the Department undertook a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of the series.

Meetings of teachers, advisers, and other departmental officers were convened and a questionnaire prepared and circulated to groups interested and involved in teaching reading to junior classes. A wide range of detailed information was sought and obtained relating to the critical issue of whether the series should be retained without change, replaced, or revised. Most of the responses, while supporting positive features in the series, indicated weaknesses and inadequacies.

N[illegible]hese was of itself sufficient for the series to be discarded but, taken [illegible]y indicated that change and improvement were needed.

[illegible]ms [illegible] the supportive responses, the series offered a core of graded material wh[illegible] had been successful in teaching many junior class children to read. As a basic core of material for teaching reading, it catered for the mobile section of the New Zealand population and offered security to teachers in planning their reading programmes. The material helped teachers to understand the importance of using context in reading for meaning and in overcoming difficulties encountered in the course of reading. It was a national series distributed free to schools, and contained some New Zealand content. The various books provided a model for publishers, who supplemented the series with a wide range of material. Because parents were not able to buy the books in the series, teachers were assured of having fresh material for use with children. The series and the accompanying handbook of suggestions were useful as a base for in-service and pre-service training.

In terms of the critical responses, the series was considered dated in regard to language, illustration, and the relevance of some content for children of the day; it lacked balance in its portrayal of sex roles and New Zealand lifestyles; it lacked impact in illustrations, language, and variety of content and format; it was unsuitable for many children making either rapid or slow progress, and for culturally different children; its impact compared unfavourably with some of the material produced by private publishers; the size of type and spacing between words, particularly in the first half of the series, needed to be increased; and the constricting controls on vocabulary and structure needed modification. While the material had not been designed for children just starting school, teachers requested inclusion of a supply of reading material suitable for use prior to the level of the twelve "Little Books". District reports were also unanimous in their opposition to the suggestion that a basic series be prepared and published by commercial firms. This opposition was strongly supported by at least one commercial firm heavily involved in publishing material supplementing the *Ready to Read* series.

The reports were considered at a week-long conference in December 1975. The key recommendation to emerge was that the series and support material be systematically revised, expanded and extended as a continuing process. Conference members considered that adoption of such a policy would allow for an economic revision of the series, retain the confidence of teachers, enable the continued use of the suitable support material already available, and ensure a smooth transition over a period of time from the original to the new material. The conference report, *Evaluation of Early Reading Materials*, included recommendations on types of story, language, sentence structure, illustrations, and format of the proposed revised series; and on the support material and in-service training considered necessary for its implementation. These recommendations subsequently provided the basis for a decision by the Government to approve the revision and extension of the series by the School Publications Branch. They also provided the brief for all those who have since been, and continue to be, involved in the revision and extension project.

Among the major outcomes of the 1975 evaluation of the *Ready to Read* series, 40 the following were emphasised.

First, teachers saw a series of graded readers as a necessary component of a whole language programme which had the teaching of young children to read as one of its goals.

Second, the series of readers must meet a number of conditions:

- the emphasis must be on stories which are so interesting that children find them compelling reading;
- if the children are to read for meaning, the stories must be capable of being related to their background of experience;
- the language used must be that which children are likely to have experienced naturally in the course of conversation and in the stories that have been read to and with them—a view summed up in the term "natural language texts";
- the series must provide a manageable gradient of difficulty and challenges in regard to the concepts, language structures, and vocabulary used to develop the theme of each story—a view summed up in the term "graded texts".

Third, in relation to the original series, the revised and expanded series had to:

- provide an easier transition into book reading;
- improve the gradient of difficulty at certain points;
- have the less successful stories replaced;
- include new types of material during the period of transition to book reading (the emergent level);
- include a wider range of literary forms such as poems, fables, fantasy, and non-fiction;
- provide better balance in relation to sex roles and various other social and cultural issues;
- make use of new information on the relation between pictures and text and on the presentation of print for beginning readers.

Fourth, a graded series of natural language texts provided teachers with a sense of security in that it:

- gave a clear sense of sequence and progression in reading materials, which in turn provided a secure base from which to choose materials related to or away from that sequence;
- provided teachers with a yardstick against which to measure progress.

Fifth, teachers were adamant that the series should be revised and published by the Department of Education, and not on a commercial basis by private publishers, implying that:

- teachers would have greater opportunity to be involved in the trial and production of revised and new materials;
- the Department had greater professional, financial, and material resources available to it to carry out the revision than commercial publishers;
- the Department, through its professional and administrative network, could more readily arrange comprehensive and extensive trials of new materials, provide in-service training and test out innovative ideas.

Development of the Revision and Extension Project

The structure that has been set up to carry out the development of the revised and extended *Ready to Read* series consists of three key elements—a National Advisory Committee, a district committee in each education board district and a development team which also acts as an editorial committee.

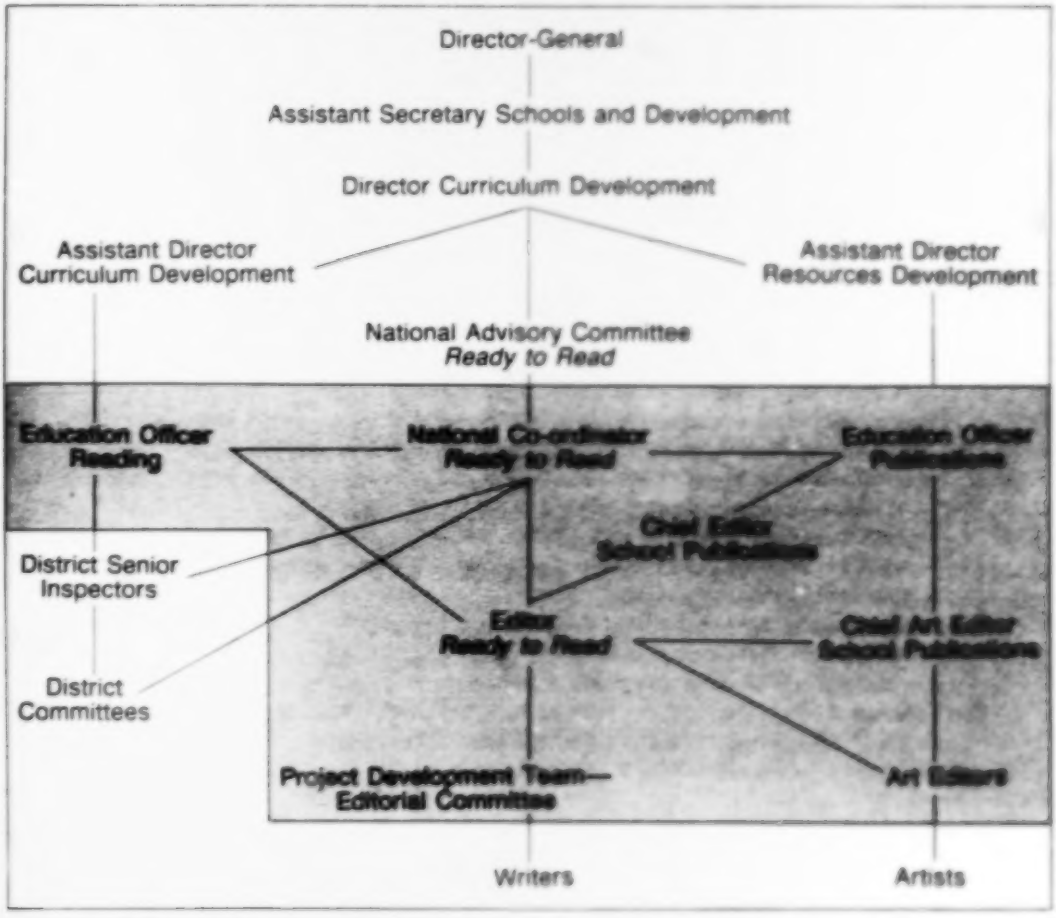
The National Advisory Committee is made up of representatives of experienced junior class teachers, the primary teachers' organisation (NZEI), advisers to junior classes, advisers on reading, inspectors of schools, the teachers' colleges, the university, early childhood education, teacher education, Maori and Pacific Islands Education, women's interests, the Book Publishers' Association, and the Curriculum Development Division and its School Publications Branch. In selecting members, an effort was made to ensure reasonable geographical distribution, with at least one member from each education board district.

The Committee's functions have been to formulate general guidelines for the development and to recommend priorities, to act as a consultative group, to maintain general oversight and appraise progress, to advise and support the development team, to consider trial material, and to recommend that publication proceed. Following initial meetings, the Committee has met annually. Members send in comments as required on trial material or other matters of interest to them.

District committees, convened by the district senior inspector of schools, have been set up in each of the ten education board districts. The committees usually include representatives from practising and experienced teachers of junior classes, the teachers' organisation (NZEI), advisory services, school principals, and, where appropriate, teachers' colleges and universities. The major functions of the committees have been to organise trials of reading material, evaluate teachers' responses, and prepare district reports. Advice was given to the committees on arranging a representative sample of schools in which to carry out trials. Criteria were supplied on which to judge materials. Teachers were asked to make a running record when trying out the difficulty level with an individual child. Comments were invited on any points relating to each story, how it was used in the classroom, and especially on children's responses to it. Many valuable suggestions were put forward as a result. Some committees accepted the invitation to undertake specific tasks or developments which were of national significance, such as preparation of a pamphlet for parents or the appraisal of available reading materials.

The development team has been made up of a specially appointed national co-ordinator and an editor who work with the education officers for school publications and for reading, the chief editor, and the chief art editor. The last two provide the links through to the art editors, writers, and artists associated with a particular publication. The Head Office members of the development team have continued to meet regularly as an editorial committee. This group is largely responsible for the selection of material, the consideration of district evaluations and other comments received, and publication of the revised and extended series.

Ready to Read *Revision and Extension Project*
Administrative Structure and Communications Network



The diagram above sets out the general structure of the *Ready to Read* revision and extension project, and shows the extensive communication links involved.

Preparing and Publishing Materials

Selecting Scripts for Trial

As a result of an invitation published in selected magazines and publications, writers submitted over seven thousand scripts for consideration. Many of the scripts were submitted by teachers. To select those pieces worthy of trial, criteria were developed which were based, firstly, on the features teachers had seen as essential in a successful book for teaching reading when they replied to the 1975 questionnaire, and, secondly, on national developments that had been taking

place in the intervening years. First and foremost, each piece had to succeed as a story, and to present challenges not only in vocabulary but also in content, concepts, and structure. To succeed as a story, the theme had to be of interest to children, and to be developed with authenticity, understanding, warmth, and—where appropriate—humour. The language had to reflect the language of books and of New Zealand children. The material had to be of such quality as to motivate children to it.

Having survived this essentially literary scrutiny, each piece was given further consideration in order to achieve a balanced series. This involved looking at:

- the level of difficulty;
- whether the piece was original, a retelling or an adaptation, a story, an article, a poem, or a play;
- the nature of the language structures, concepts and vocabulary used in developing the theme;
- the type of culture depicted;
- the characters, main and subsidiary—their roles within the family and community, their age, the male and female ratio, and family composition;
- the emotions evoked;
- the setting—whether indoors or outdoors, rural or urban, school, home, or community;
- the time—season, duration;
- the tense;
- whether there was stereotyping, including sex stereotyping;
- sensitive issues;
- legal and safety aspects;
- equivalent levels and stories in the original series.

The application of the above criteria and considerations resulted in 150 of the over seven thousand scripts received being accepted for trial. Of these, approximately 120 will finally be included in the revised and extended *Ready to Read* series.

Trials

The editor screened most of the original scripts, consulting with other members of the development team as appropriate. When a script was to be used in a trial, the author was informed. Where it was envisaged that a script would be acceptable only after considerable alteration, the changes were negotiated with the author in the manner which has been customary for many years in the School Publications Branch. Once agreement was reached, the author was paid at the Branch's standard rates. The art editor, in consultation with the editor, prepared a design for the black-and-white trial booklet, and planned the art work and the nature of the illustrations needed. Art work and illustrations were commissioned, and eventually a set of the low cost, trial booklet was printed. The size of the printing depended on whether the trial was to be carried out on a national basis or in a restricted group of schools.

In the national trials, twelve hundred copies of each title of the black-and-white booklets have usually been distributed through the district committees for
44 trial in the selected schools. This gave teachers and children, advisers, inspectors

and other departmental officers and groups interested in the reading materials used in junior classes the opportunity to comment. Where appropriate, the editor has also sent copies to individuals and groups, and invited their comments. Teachers have been asked to comment on the interest engendered by the text and illustrations, the aspects of particular interest to children, and any parts of the text where the flow of meaning has been interrupted by unmanageable challenges in concept, sentence and story structure, or vocabulary. They were also asked to provide a description of the children, and to state whether the children were reading with the teacher, with each other or by themselves, and, where appropriate, to complete a running record. The teacher's overall rating for the book, comments on the material's worth in the planned series, and an outline of follow-up work were also sought.

Evaluation of Trials

The collation of responses from individual teachers, district committees, and other interested groups and individuals provided the basis for a national evaluation of each piece. This was made in terms of its general appeal and impact on children, regional and cultural differences which influenced its reception and use, and its place in a balanced reading programme. The strengths and weaknesses of the text, of the illustrations, and of the combined text and illustration were carefully considered. The collation of running records made in schools throughout New Zealand established levels, and identified manageable challenges appropriate to the level tried and the approach used. Difficulties which interrupted the flow of meaning for a significant number of children were identified and amended. A trial of the amended story with another group of children was then carried out, and further reports called for.

The final trial script and a summary of all the relevant information, including recommendations by members of the National Advisory Committee, were then considered by the editorial committee. Particular attention was given at this stage to the effect of the story on the balance of the series and whether it might introduce an unwanted bias. A decision was then made on whether to proceed with publication, to seek further modification, or withdraw the story from further consideration.

Stories which met the high standards demanded were then prepared for publication. Colour requirements usually resulted in the commissioning of a new set of illustrations. Publication contracts and copyright issues were arranged with the authors and illustrators, and the normal procedures of the Branch were followed for publication, printing, seeking approval to distribute, and distribution.

The Shape and Features of the Revised and Extended *Ready to Read* Series

An important feature of the revised and expanded *Ready to Read* series has been the production of books which, in appearance, appeal, and quality of story, can take their place alongside the best of children's picture-story books, yet be part

of a structured reading series which provides children with a manageable progression of difficulties and challenges. Variety in format and presentation emphasises that each book exists in its own right as a picture-story book. Devices which identify each book as part of a graded reading series have been made as unobtrusive as possible. Authors and illustrators associated with the various titles have been given full credit, as in a normal picture-story book. The aim has been to produce books which look like and are "real" books containing stories which are "real" stories.

The original *Ready to Read* series consisted of four groups of three books to make the twelve little books, with a progression of difficulty through the groups and the six miscellanies that follow. In the revised and extended series, the levels associated with the four groups of Little Books have been retained, as have the colour indentifications of red, yellow, dark blue, and green. Collectively these four levels have been designated the Early Reading Stage. When completed, the Early Reading Stage will be expanded from the original twelve titles to fifteen single titles.

Prior to the Early Reading Stage, a new stage, known as the Emergent Reading Stage, has been created. This has no equivalent in the original series. The Emergent Stage is being identified by a magenta colour, and, when completed, will also consist of fifteen single titles.

Following the Early Reading Stage comes the Fluent Reading Stage, which retains the difficulty progression of the first four miscellanies of the original series. These four levels within the Fluent Reading Stage are being designated by the colours orange, light blue, purple, and dark yellow, in line with the colours used for the equivalent levels of the original series. Seven miscellanies and some single titles are planned for the Fluent Reading Stage.

Books at the Emergent Reading Stage are intended to provide opportunities for children and teachers to share a worthwhile story thus enabling the children to enjoy literature before they are able to read it for themselves. The books offer opportunities for children to listen to the sound and rhythm of language through revisiting favourite stories and examining new ones. They can also be used to develop an awareness that books have special conventions which enable the reader to interpret the author's message and that meaning is gained from the text as well as the illustrations. Several of these books contain repetitive elements which encourage joining-in, and provide support in independent readings. The repetitive structure within each book provides security and develops an awareness that the text remains constant. The story line offers opportunity for prediction, while the careful match of text and illustration develops an understanding that the pictures provide clues for, and confirmation of, these predictions.

Books at the Early Reading Stage are intended mainly for guided reading where the teacher guides the child in reading the text. They are intended to establish more firmly the habit of reading for meaning by providing stories of high interest set in situations and using concepts familiar to the children. The nature of the stories, the attitude of demanding meaning, and the teacher's guidance, help children to:

- use their background experience and knowledge of language, books, and print conventions;
- take risks in making approximations and predictions;

- reread or read on when they meet a difficulty;
- confirm predictions or self-correct by using the context, the illustrations, and letter-sound associations.

Some of the stories are particularly intended for shared reading.

Books at the Fluent Reading Stage provide a greater variety of literary styles, and include fiction, non-fiction, plays, fables and legends. Some of the stories are revisions of material in the original series. The emphasis on high quality stories is continued, while the gradation of difficulty in a manageable progression is continued in line with children's growing competence and fluency. Emphasis is placed on developing the reader's awareness of the interdependence of meaning, language structure, and visual cues, and in gaining more confidence and skill in using the strategies being developed at the earlier levels for gaining meaning and overcoming difficulties. The books can be used for setting different purposes for reading, and helping children develop flexibility in regard to accuracy and reading rate, according to the purpose and the style of the material. The miscellanies provide opportunities for children to make links between other works by an author or illustrator, and to identify and make comparisons between elements in materials of a similar type or theme. The single titles present material suitable for use in shared and guided reading.

As the new titles are completed they can be used alongside the titles of the original series until stocks of the original series run out or are discarded. The original series will not be reprinted.

Part of the extension of the revised series consists of eight books for sharing. Each is a single title and is sixteen pages long. These books have been selected for their high literary quality and are intended mainly to provide shared reading experiences with the emphasis on enjoyment and enrichment. The books for sharing are suitable for use at a variety of levels, and have no direct equivalent in the original series.

The publication of fifteen enlarged text cards has already been completed. The traditional rhymes used provide opportunities for listening to the sound and rhythm of language. As with the books for sharing, they also help children develop memory for text, and give them the chance to become aware of print conventions in a supportive group.

A small, eight-page, black-and-white book has been provided for new entrants to take home after their first day at school. The book provides opportunities for the teacher and the child, and the parent and the child, to talk over the school day. The teacher completes the text, and either the teacher or the child provides some illustrations, making the book individual for each child. It meets parents' and children's expectations of taking home a book on the first day, and also provides information for the parents.

By the time revision is complete, at least one book from each stage and one of the books for sharing will be issued as a teacher's edition. Each will include notes for teachers, which present an outline of the roles of the child and the teacher in meeting the challenges of the text. These ideas and suggestions are being organised in the following categories: matching the child to the text; setting the scene; guiding the child through the text; and activities following the reading. Many of the ideas included, or being included in the teacher's editions, arose from the evaluation reports.

Also under preparation is a set of guidelines for teachers. The guidelines will discuss such topics as the reading process, children's thinking and language acquisition, the balanced programme, teaching reading in the multi-class classroom, observation and monitoring, and suggestions for a school reading kit.

Suggestions have already been made as to the three major ways teachers can present the books according to the abilities, needs, and interests of the child or group. These are:

- shared reading, where the teacher gives a considerable amount of assistance to help the children through the text;
- guided reading, where the teacher introduces the book, discusses concepts, and asks questions that will help the children read the text (often silently); prediction, knowledge of language, self-correction, use of letter-sound associations, and confirmation are all part of this process of thinking through the text to explore new ideas and feelings;
- independent reading, where the children read the book on their own, giving the teacher the opportunity to observe their independent reading behaviour.

On the back of each book of the revised and extended series is a unique copyrighted device, the colour wheel. This consists of a circle divided into nine radiating segments, with each segment coloured to correspond with one of the colour levels of the revised and extended series. A letter S, G, or I in the outer ring of the circle indicates the suggested use at a particular level as outlined in the previous paragraph. A major value of the colour wheel is the assistance it gives teachers in rapidly linking each new title with the levels of the original series and other available material.

It is not the intention that teachers should confine their approaches to the three major ways suggested above, nor that they should restrict the reading material used to the *Ready to Read* series. Publishers have provided much material which can be matched to the various levels of the original series, and much of this will still be valid with the revised series.

Appropriate new publications from commercial publishers will again be welcomed by schools. The Department's publication, *Books for Junior Classes*, which lists books suitable for shared, guided, or independent reading at the various levels, is being revised by a group of teachers and advisers and will be republished in due course. This publication will continue to assist teachers in locating a suitable publication to meet the needs of a child or group of children, in organising available material, and in determining priorities when purchasing new materials.

A pamphlet for parents of new entrant five-year-olds has been developed by teachers and others in one of the districts. The pamphlet emphasises the importance of home and school working together to support and encourage children as they learn to read.

Finally, the Audio Production Unit of the Department of Education is producing "readalong" cassettes of the stories from the books for sharing, and from selected single titles and miscellanies. Cassettes of one title have already been distributed free to schools, and cassettes of further titles will be available for purchase. The cassettes are of particular value in assisting an individual child to read an unknown or otherwise difficult story. Slow, even readings assist the
48 child to match the spoken and the written word. Music allows time for the reader

to turn the page, scan the new illustrations, and locate the beginning of the new text. The same story is recorded on both sides of the cassette tape. The colour of the cassette label matches the book cover.

Future Developments

While the major part of the work associated with carrying out the planned revision and extension of the *Ready to Read* series has been completed, much has still to be done if the remaining books are to be available in the schools by the end of 1984. Some suggestions arising from the 1975 evaluation could still be taken up, but would require further policy decisions. In the meantime, all associated with the teaching of reading in junior classes will be working to ensure a smooth transition to the new material as junior class teachers incorporate it into their classroom programmes. At the same time, they will assuredly continue to monitor the response and progress of the children as part of the continuing process of evaluating the effectiveness of the new materials and the methods associated with their use.

It can be noted at this point that with the arrival of the new materials, teachers are re-appraising the value and use of materials already in schools. One outcome of this re-appraisal is that commercially produced materials which have had limited use are now being used in a more flexible and varied manner.

It can also be noted that the structure set up to carry out the revision and extension project, and the processes inherent in it, have ensured that the whole exercise has had, and continues to have, a major in-service training function. It is difficult to place a value on this major benefit to be offset against the costs of the project.

The original *Ready to Read* series has been used in a number of school systems in other countries, and arrangements for marketing the revised and extended *Ready to Read* series are under consideration.

Part Five The In-Service Training of Teachers in New Zealand and How it Has Been Adapted for Reading

Policy Objectives for In-Service Training of Teachers

The main objectives for in-service training of New Zealand teachers in all branches of the profession and at all levels of seniority are:

- that all teachers should have regular opportunities to undertake short courses of in-service training in order to keep abreast of developments in their field;
- that special priority should be given to the provision of induction courses for teachers moving to positions of responsibility and principalships, teachers transferring from one branch of the service to another, and teachers returning to service after a significant break;
- that in addition to short courses (that is, those ranging from a day to a week) courses should be developed that vary in length from six weeks to a year;
- that teachers' colleges conduct in-service courses for teachers in service, with particular reference to courses of six weeks' and one term's duration;
- that universities provide diploma courses, supplemented by practical experience, in fields in which they have specialised knowledge and experience, for example, courses for educational psychologists and for teachers of English as a second language;
- that a national network of in-service centres should be planned and established as conditions permit, to provide venues for non-residential courses, particularly outside the main centres;
- that future in-service centres, where they are planned and established, should be developed in conjunction with the storage and display of audio-visual and other classroom resources for teaching;

- that ways should be explored of further engaging the teaching profession at the local as well as the national level in the development of policies for in-service training and in their implementation;
- that further opportunity should be made available for teachers to complete a university degree, a postgraduate qualification, or other recognised teaching qualification.

Structure of In-Service Training in New Zealand

The structure for providing in-service training in New Zealand can be considered under two broad headings—national and district.

National Provision

National courses, where members are selected from throughout New Zealand and therefore require residential facilities, include Lopdell Centre courses, courses held on a Maori marae, induction and retraining of advisers, outdoor education leadership training, careers advisers' courses, special education courses, and curriculum development courses.

The national courses and conferences held in conjunction with the *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project come under the heading of curriculum development courses, and have been held at the Lopdell Centre residential in-service institution. As the Department's only full-time national residential facility, the Lopdell Centre has been used as a national conference and working party centre for the development of those issues and policies to which high priority has been given.

A National Advisory Committee on In-Service Training, made up of representatives of the teaching organisations and Department education officers from divisions of the Department which have an interest in in-service issues, meets from time to time as a consultative and advisory body on in-service training. Its functions include identifying the national needs for short and long term in-service education and training of teachers, advising on the resources required to meet these needs, and recommending on the most effective use of resources available for in-service education and training of teachers. It also monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of in-service provisions, and prepares and distributes reports on issues, practices, and developments in in-service training.

The Teachers' Refresher Course Committee is a group made up mainly of representatives of teacher organisations. Its purpose is to organise an annual series of courses, usually provided by and for teachers. The courses are usually of a residential nature, and held during school holidays when use can be made of vacant hostel accommodation. The Government provides the Committee with a financial grant, while administrative and professional support is provided by the Department. Teachers attending these courses usually have the cost of travel met by the Committee, with the teachers meeting accommodation costs. Courses on the teaching of reading sponsored by the Committee have always been strongly supported by teachers.

Another national in-service provision of considerable importance is the Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit of the Department of Education. The Unit is at present at Wellington Teachers' College, and is serviced by the Correspondence School. It offers a wide range of substantial distance education courses to people from throughout New Zealand who are involved in some teaching function. Most enrolments are from primary and secondary teachers interested in improving their classroom proficiency and their qualifications. The four courses offered in reading are each approximately at the first level of a paper for a bachelor's degree. They are: "The Reading Process", "Reading in the Primary School", "Reading in the Secondary School", and "Teaching Pupils with Reading Difficulties". Other courses, such as "The Learner of English", "The Teacher of English", and "Traditional Literature for Young People" also have considerable relevance for the teacher of reading. Since the inception of the Unit, the correspondence courses related to teaching reading in primary schools have been among those most popular with teachers. Teachers within reasonable distance of the six teachers' colleges may now enrol for courses which are similar in content to those offered by the Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit. The teachers' college courses involve attendance at lectures, seminars, and workshops held outside normal school hours—usually in the evening.

Some university courses provide opportunity for teachers to pursue reading interests in the course of completing a degree or diploma. Teachers living and teaching within travelling distance of a university may attend lectures as part-time students, while others enrol through the Massey University Centre for Extramural Studies.

District Provision

A key structure in the organisation of in-service training at the local level is the District Senior Inspector's In-Service Training Committee; there is one of these committees in each of the ten education board districts. Approximately three-fifths of the sum approved annually by the Government for in-service training purposes is allocated to districts, with each district senior inspector being responsible for the expenditure of his or her district's portion of the allocation. Each advisory committee is representative of the various teachers' interest groups within the district, and includes the advisers and inspectors of schools. The committee assesses local needs and local involvement in national developments, establishes district priorities, and recommends a programme of in-service courses at a variety of suitable centres which will enable the most effective and efficient use of the available resources. The major portion of each district allocation is spent on employing relief teachers. This provision enables regular teachers to be released from their classrooms to attend courses for which they have been selected, or for which they have applied to attend and been accepted. Some money is also set aside to meet the necessary travelling expenses of teachers attending courses and for equipment used.

When a proposed programme of in-service courses has been approved by the district senior inspector and the district education board, course directors (usually selected teachers or advisers) are appointed, planning committees are arranged
52 to draw up a detailed course programme, and schools are informed so that teachers

may make application to attend courses which are of interest to them. Applications are made through, and after discussion with, the school principal.

It should be noted that some courses are held under the auspices of the three Regional Superintendents of Education, who consult with the districts in their region when arranging courses which can more appropriately be organised on a regional basis.

Courses are usually held at one of the in-service centres located throughout the country. Twenty-six in-service centres have been officially recognised in the ten education board districts, and have been supplied with furniture, equipment, and catering facilities suitable for teachers undertaking in-service training. Three have been upgraded to the status of teachers' centres, with specially approved full-time staffing. Thirteen of the centres are associated with Rural Education Activities Programmes. These programmes serve selected rural areas and provide additional support for pre-school, primary, secondary, and aspects of tertiary and community education in their rural areas.

Supporting the Classroom Teacher of Reading

Primary schools vary in size from a minimum of nine pupils to up to approximately seven hundred pupils, and may be in remote rural areas, rural centres, small towns, or in large cities. Staffing entitlement varies from the one teacher in sole charge schools, to over twenty teachers in very large schools. In the smaller schools especially, one teacher will have responsibility for a number of class levels, and becomes expert at what is called multi-class teaching. The number of class levels in the one classroom usually decreases as the size of the school increases. The result is that in the larger schools, children in one classroom are usually classified at the one level, though this does not prevent their academic achievement covering a wide range. Once a school has an entitlement of eight classes, an additional teacher is appointed to release the principal from full time responsibility for a class. The staffing entitlement of a school is worked out on the number of pupils estimated to be close to its maximum for the year. Junior classes tend to be smaller early in the year, and to build up as five-year-olds are enrolled. In larger schools, fifth birthday enrolment often means that the senior teacher with responsibility for junior classes (STJC) does not have responsibility for a single class until later in the year. As a result, the senior teacher is able to provide the junior class teachers with close and continuing support during the early part of the year when programmes are being developed, routines established, and children being settled into a new classroom. Some schools which are judged to have special needs may have an additional teacher or teachers appointed.

In all schools the principal has day-to-day responsibility for the management of the school, and is expected to give professional leadership and guidance to the teaching staff. Schools with four or more teaching positions have one or more of these positions designated as positions of responsibility. A teacher appointed to one of these positions is paid additional salary, and usually has responsibility

delegated by the principal for some aspect of professional leadership or guidance of other staff members. In this way, all schools have built into their staffing structure a component which provides for immediate support of the classroom teacher. In addition, many schools have a teacher who has developed strengths and knowledge on the teaching of reading, perhaps through having followed up a particular interest, perhaps through having studied an Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit course, perhaps through having attended an intensive in-service course of up to six weeks or more. Such a teacher may act as a consultant on reading to other staff members in the school.

Support for the classroom teacher is also available from outside the school. Reference has already been made to the advisory services, such as the advisers to junior classes, advisers on reading, advisers to rural schools, and advisers on the education of Maori and Pacific Islanders. Depending on the nature and location of the school, the advisers give valuable support with reading programmes to the teacher of junior classes. Support may also be provided by members of the inspectorate, psychologists, reading recovery tutors, resource teachers of reading, and speech therapists. A resource teacher of reading is a specialist teacher who works either in a reading clinic or as an itinerant teacher in a cluster of schools. On a regular basis, this teacher provides specialist assistance for individual children with severe reading difficulties, and advises teachers on how the needs of these children might best be met on a day-to-day basis in the classroom.

In an endeavour to make in-service training more relevant to the needs of a particular school, school-based in-service training has been given greater attention in recent years. Informal discussions among staff members have always been a feature of the interaction among teachers in most schools. Regular staff meetings with a planned agenda enable attention to be given to curriculum topics, such as the teaching of reading, and to the problems being met by some pupils. In larger schools, teachers who work with a teacher in a position of responsibility may meet regularly as a group or syndicate on organisational and programme matters related to their group of classes. Several teachers who have enrolled for a paper such as "The Reading Process" through the Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit may also set up a school-based study group for mutual support. In such cases special guidance will be provided by the Unit. The advent of the "teacher only" day, when children are not required to attend school, has provided a relatively inexpensive way (in that relief teachers are not employed) to develop one full day a year of planned, school-based, in-service training. Most schools have also organised libraries of recommended professional books which assist teachers in building up their professional background.

Specific In-Service Development for Teachers of Reading

Since 1975, when the Department of Education carried out its comprehensive and systematic evaluation of the original *Ready to Read* series, there has been a number of significant developments. These have been of particular importance
54 for improving the knowledge base and the teaching skills of practising teachers,

especially those with responsibility for teaching reading to children in their first two to three years at school. The remainder of this section will identify these projects, outline their purpose and nature, and indicate their significance for in-service training for teachers of reading.

On the Way to Reading

On the Way to Reading is a twelve part series of radio programmes aimed primarily at parents. It was a joint production of the Continuing Education Unit of Radio New Zealand and the Department of Education, and was first broadcast in 1978. The programmes set out to show how children from infancy up to about the age of seven gain experience in using language and, in time, learn to read. Advice on content was provided by the Department, and, as part of the project, the School Publications Branch published a book, *On the Way to Reading*, written by an adviser to junior classes in Wellington. The book complements the content of the programmes, but stands in its own right as an independent publication and resource. Subsequent to the broadcast of the series, the programmes were recorded on tape cassettes and made available through the Department's National Film Library. The cassettes and the books thus provide a kit of materials which pre-school and junior class teachers can continue to use with parents of young children.

One effect of the series was to make parents who participated in the programme more knowledgeable about the process of language acquisition by young children, and better informed about the New Zealand style of teaching reading. Teachers had to be well prepared if they were to act as resource people to the groups which were set up to listen to and discuss the programmes, and subsequently in discussing teaching methods and the progress of individual children with parents. In this way the project has had and continues to have a marked in-service training role for teachers.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the *On the Way to Reading* project in informing parents was commissioned by Radio New Zealand, and was carried out by Dr Tom Nicholson, a researcher and writer on reading, and a member of the staff of Waikato University. In short, the evaluation showed that parents "got the message" of the radio series and the booklet.

Another interesting point was that virtually all the parents involved in the survey read to their children for at least a few minutes each day. The evaluator also considered that, as a future resource for schools and pre-school groups, the potential of *On the Way to Reading* seemed clearly established.

The Early Reading In-Service Course (ERIC)

The Early Reading In-Service Course, or ERIC, had its origin when a decision was made by the Auckland Standing Committee on Reading, convened by the District Senior Inspector, to plan and develop an in-service course on teaching children to read. While there was reasonable satisfaction with standards of reading in primary schools, impetus was given to the decision, first, by the availability of some evidence that the needs of the less able and least well prepared

children were not being sufficiently well identified and catered for early enough in their school career, and, second, the entry into the New Zealand school system of Pacific Island children, many of whom spoke little English. At the same time, there were schools which were having considerable success in meeting the needs of such children. There were also significant developments both in New Zealand and overseas, which provided more appropriate models of the reading process and new diagnostic procedures consistent with those models, which could be used with very young children. The basis of the information to help more teachers to be able to help these children appeared to be available. The problem was to define this information in greater detail, shape it into a form in which it could be readily understood and applied by teachers, and find a means of disseminating the information to a large number of teachers over a relatively short period of time within the constraints of available resources. The project was supported at a national level, and, by 1978, had developed to the point where the course was available in all education boards districts.

The development was carried out by a team of three, made up of a district adviser on reading, a teachers' college senior lecturer who had previously been a district adviser on reading and reading clinic teacher, and an inspector of schools. They were supported by twelve teachers who spent part of their time developing desired teaching practices. These were documented on tape and slides, from lessons which were neither scripted nor rehearsed. An advisory committee of twenty-five people, drawn from all areas of the education service, monitored each stage of development.

In preparing the course, the developers considered a complex set of goals and principles. These included: wide and rapid availability (for every New Zealand junior class teacher, if possible); in-depth involvement over many weeks; spaced learning; conveying complex ideas such as "developmental learning" and "diagnostic teaching"; personal control of the course by participants; convenience and flexibility in attending; large numbers of practical examples; the stimulation of professional growth through personal commitment; relevance for teachers at all levels of experience; and fostering interaction among teachers.

The outcome was a set of eleven audio-visual units, with a twelfth unit, which consists of a booklet only, and summarises the key ideas set out in the previous eleven units. Each unit was designed to be viewed individually at a specially prepared centre, where multiple copies of each unit and audio-visual facilities would be available. Features of each centre were to be supporting displays, and the presence of a resource teacher who could provide information on request, and, during the following two terms, visit in their schools those teachers who had participated in the course. Selection and training of a group of resource teachers was a necessary preliminary to the introduction of the course. Alternative arrangements to the ideal centre were developed to provide for small numbers of teachers in some situations such as rural areas.

The course provided for units to be taken at weekly intervals; this allowed teachers time to assimilate and practise the ideas developed in them. A prescriptive approach was seen as unnecessary and undesirable. Emphasis was placed on developing teachers' understandings of the reading process, on stressing the
56 importance of sensitive observation of children's reading behaviour, and on

examining the relevance of materials and programme organisation in promoting high interest in reading. Teachers could expect to spend up to one and a half hours each week at a centre, though each teacher would have control over the pace of working through each unit. Units were made up of from ten to eighty colour slides, and a cassette tape containing approximately forty-five minutes of listening. Listening was interspersed by reference to teachers' booklets of between twelve and thirty-five pages, and to other references available in each carrel or station.

After a series of modifications during the development process, the course, as finally implemented nationally in 1978, was evaluated from 1978 to 1980. The evaluation did not attempt to assess the content of the course, but rather to assess teachers' reactions to it, and its effect on classroom methods and practices. Reactions were very favourable. The method of presentation was well received, with teachers commenting on the lack of distractions and their ability to control its pace. Some teachers would have preferred more time and opportunity for follow-up discussion after each unit.

ERIC did not set out to make a radical change in the teaching methods of junior class teachers, but to build on the best practices and insights from current research and theory. Teachers' reactions ensured that this did in fact happen. The great majority reported that they felt influenced by the course, with the amount of influence very much linked to the follow-up they were involved in. Classroom observation by the evaluator bore out the contention of teachers that one of the main influences was in observing and diagnosing pupils. The development of a balanced programme, the use of shared book experiences, and an increased understanding of reading behaviour were also seen as important aspects of the course.

Observation in schools towards the end of the evaluation period confirmed that teachers were using a greater variety of approaches and resources in their programme. Reliance by some teachers on graded materials as the major part of the instructional programme had almost completely disappeared. Running records were being used to some extent by most teachers with most children. There had also been a marked change from using a single track approach for children not meeting success, to using a combination of methods to overcome their problems. Children were also being allowed more time to read material of their own choosing. Both teachers and children were reported as appearing more relaxed, and to be enjoying reading more.

Since the evaluation of ERIC was completed, teachers who were unable to undertake the course initially have had an opportunity to do so, while many have had a chance to revisit ERIC. It is estimated that over 20 000 teachers have now taken the course. It has proved particularly valuable to teachers returning to the service after an absence from teaching and to overseas teachers joining the New Zealand service and keen to develop a fuller appreciation of the New Zealand style of teaching reading. Other developments taking place over the last two years are causing a further resurgence of interest in the course from teachers keen to get the greatest benefit from those more recent developments.

A start has been made on revising ERIC, to bring it up-to-date and incorporate improvements suggested over the past five years.

In-Service Training Effects of the 'Ready to Read' Revision and Extension Project

Reference has already been made to the in-service component inherent in the processes of carrying out the revision and extension of the *Ready to Read* series. These will be reviewed briefly here.

First was the involvement of junior class teachers in completing the questionnaire associated with the 1975 evaluation of the *Ready to Read* series. At about the same time, the development of the ERIC programme in Auckland was beginning to have a ripple effect on teachers in other parts of the country, especially in regard to reading materials. Knowledge of the pending revision of the *Ready to Read* series was also heightening interest in reading materials at the junior classes level. The nationwide introduction of ERIC from the beginning of 1978, with the associated training of resource teachers, and the preliminary meetings in relation to the revision and extension project, can be regarded as having reciprocal effects.

The appointments later in 1979 of a national co-ordinator and an editor for the *Ready to Read* Revision and Extension Project caused the pace to quicken. A further questionnaire on reading materials, the invitation to submit scripts for possible inclusion in the revised series, and the widespread involvement of teachers in the trial of the stories and the need to make informed judgements as to their worth in accordance with stated criteria, all stimulated further interest. It should be noted that different schools were usually used in each district to try out different titles. This had the effect of spreading both interest and involvement. The receipt in all schools of the newly published story books has spread interest in the place and use of quality reading materials still further, while the arrival from time to time of new titles serves to maintain and quicken interest. The expressed wish of many teachers to repeat the ERIC course is believed to be one result. As noted above, the re-assessment of materials in schools and the broadening of teaching approaches to develop more balanced programmes, along with the more productive use of a wider range of reading materials, are others.

The Later Reading In-Service Course (LARIC)

In 1978, the Government gave approval for the development of the Later Reading In-Service Course (LARIC). The purpose of the course is to improve the teaching of reading to children in middle and upper classes of the primary schools. The programme aims to increase teachers' understanding of their pupils, and of the reading process, to heighten their enthusiasm, and to offer practical ideas for use in the classroom. In several ways, LARIC is modelled on ERIC, and aims to capitalise on, and extend through the primary school, its substantial benefits. The major difference, apart from the content differences associated with the target group, is that it is presented on video-tape, instead of slides and cassettes. The use of video-tape as the chief means of presentation for a teachers' course which will be available on a national basis is a major innovation in the in-service training of teachers in New Zealand.

Members of the development team were drawn from the ranks of teachers, advisers, and teachers' college lecturers, with the project being based at Christchurch Teachers' College. The project was started with a research study which examined teaching practice in relation to reading in middle and upper primary classes. The research findings have guided the selection of content, the emphases made and the kind and level of presentation. Throughout the development, there has been regular consultation with teachers and representatives of the primary teachers' organisation, and with reading specialists in teachers' colleges, the universities, and the Department of Education.

LARIC consists of ten units to be presented at weekly intervals to groups of up to ten teachers at small centres in vacant classrooms. In essence, the programme has recorded on video-tape and in booklets the practice of some teachers in teaching reading. Videos have been made of teachers at work in many parts of New Zealand, in large urban and small rural schools, paying due regard to the culturally different. Typically, presentation of each unit will involve the group of teachers in viewing a video-tape, and then discussing the ideas presented with each other, and with a tutor associated with the programme. This will be followed by reading and discussion of the unit booklet, a copy of which each teacher will then take away as a permanent source of practical ideas. Time will also be provided for the teachers to become familiar with up-to-date teaching materials displayed at the centre.

Programme production had been practically completed by the end of July 1983 and the training of the first group of tutors was under way in preparation for the first full trial of the course in Christchurch during the last term of the 1983 school year. It is intended that LARIC will be made available to all education board districts from the beginning of 1984, when it will be offered to groups of teachers according to what in-service allocations allow. In about two years' time, it is planned to complete an evaluation of the effectiveness of the course by carrying out research on the practices of teachers and the reading behaviour of pupils, and comparing the information gained with that resulting from the baseline study which initiated the project.

Reading Recovery and In-Service Training

Reference has previously been made to reading recovery as a set of diagnostic procedures and teaching techniques applicable to from ten to twenty percent of six-year-old children in a particular school who are making the slowest progress. The diagnostic procedures arose out of the research work of Dr Marie Clay in Auckland, with the recovery procedures based largely on the practices of teachers who had had a measure of success in helping such children. One of the most important features about reading recovery is the emphasis placed on intervention at the earliest possible time for the child who is obviously having difficulty in learning to read.

Seven principles form the basis for organising the programme of re-teaching. The first principle, that of acceleration, aims at helping the child to catch up with his or her peer group in book-reading ability. The second principle provides for an intensive, individualised programme approach, with the recovery teacher working with the child for at least half an hour each day. Close supervision of

regular, frequent, short lessons is emphasised. The third principle involves the recovery teacher in identifying and checking the child's grasp of the details of the processes involved in book reading, removing the confusions which are causing the difficulties, and helping the child organise the details into independence-promoting reading strategies. The fourth principle entails attention to the sequence in which the school and classroom present reading to the child, the sequence in which the reading process is acquired, and the tailoring of a programme which will enable the child to make accelerated progress. The fifth principle requires extension of the teaching-learning sequences to include creative writing so that full advantage can be taken of the reciprocal effects of learning both reading and writing. The sixth principle entails ensuring that the child does not become dependent on the tutor, and can transfer back to the classroom and perform independently in the class. The seventh principle involves checking from time to time, to ensure that the child is maintaining progress on return to the normal classroom programme, and, if necessary, providing short "booster" courses of intensive assistance.

Several in-service elements can be noted in the programme of reading recovery. One is Dr Clay's publication, *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties—A Diagnostic Survey with Recovery Procedures*. The book provides background to, and a rationale for, the programme. It also provides detailed information on the nature, administration, and interpretation of the ten diagnostic procedures which may be incorporated into the suggested eleven-step recovery programme. Such a programme is aimed at overcoming the confusions and gaps or inadequacies in the processing strategies of the individual child. Research data are also included. The book constitutes a continuing resource available to all those associated with reading recovery programmes.

Another major in-service component is the tutor training associated with implementing the programme on a national basis. Selected teachers from each education board district have been trained as tutors in an intensive, practical course in Auckland lasting one year. Since the beginning of 1983, tutors in all districts have been training teachers from individual schools which have taken up the programme. An important and innovative aspect of this training, spaced over a year, is that recovery teachers learn from observing each other with children behind a one-way screen. The continuing consultation between the recovery teacher and the class teacher of each child involved in the recovery programme means that the principles and specialised techniques involved are being understood within the schools concerned.

Conclusion

In many ways, the provisions and developments of in-service training complement each other. Their reciprocal effect on teachers developing a coherent body of knowledge, understanding, and attitudes related to the learning and teaching of reading will be apparent.

Annex

New Zealand Portfolio of Materials: an Annotated List of Selected Materials

Each overseas participant received a set of the publications listed below, for use during the seminar and for subsequent reference. Unless otherwise indicated, the publications have been produced by the New Zealand Department of Education. Publications additional to those listed were also on display and participants were able to select those relevant and of interest.

Four publications by Dr Marie M. Clay noted at the end of the annotated list, were made available to participants from funds provided through the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

Language in the Primary School : English (1961)
This primary school syllabus statement has provided the basis for the teaching of language, including reading, in New Zealand primary schools since 1962. The syllabus statement is currently under revision.

Suggestions for Teaching English in the Primary School
This teachers' handbook was first published as three separate bulletins between 1961 and 1964. It provides suggestions on how the syllabus in language might be carried into effect. Revised teachers' handbooks are at present being written.

Language for Learning, Janet Holmes, (1982)
This is the first in a series of booklets, "Education in the Multicultural School", intended to assist teachers in multicultural classrooms. The series will replace earlier material which provided assistance on developing programmes more suited to Maori children.

Elements of the Teaching of Reading (1971)—A Supplement to the Syllabus : *Language in the Primary School*
This syllabus supplement provides a sharper focus on the teaching of reading than is provided in the more general syllabus statement on English language.

Suggestions for Teaching Reading in Infant Classes (1962)
This handbook by the editor of the original *Ready to Read* series explained the principles on which the series was based and made suggestions as to how the books might be most effectively used.

Suggestions for Teaching Reading in Primary and Secondary Schools (1972)
This handbook was the culmination of a lifetime's experience in teaching reading, and assisting children and teachers by New Zealand's first national adviser on reading.

Suggestions for Teaching Children with Reading Difficulties (1978)
This handbook expanded on the previous handbook, and focused more particularly on children with reading difficulties through a number of illuminating case studies.

Learning to Read—A Pamphlet for Parents
This pamphlet provides information for parents on learning to read and makes suggestions on how parents might assist.

Learning to Read: Helping the Older Child—A Pamphlet for Parents
This pamphlet complements the previous pamphlet but is oriented more to parents with older children meeting difficulties in learning to read.

Ideas for Play at Home
This is a set of sixteen pamphlets prepared for the Department of Education by the Committee on Information for Parents of Young Children. It is aimed at giving practical suggestions to parents in providing worthwhile experiences for young children through using materials readily available in most homes.

Read a Story
A further pamphlet by the Committee on Information for Parents of Young Children, *Read a Story* emphasises the value of parents reading to and with young children, and suggests suitable book titles.

UNESCO Educational Studies and Documents No 25, *The New Zealand School Publications Branch* (1957)
This document published by UNESCO, provides a useful historical background to the present-day functioning of the New Zealand School Publications Branch.

Education, Volume 31, Number One, 1982
This special issue of the Department of Education's magazine for teachers, *Education*, was produced to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the New Zealand *School Journal*. The *Journal* is a miscellany of reading material published in four parts for children from approximately seven to thirteen years, and is distributed free to all schools in New Zealand.

School Journal 75
This special edition of the *School Journal* explains to children of approximately seven to nine years the procedures involved in compiling, publishing, and printing a journal. It provides an interesting example of how a complex topic is developed for children.

School Journal Catalogue, 1965–81
This catalogue aims to assist teachers and pupils in making more efficient use of the *School Journal* as a resource. An updated edition is in the course of preparation.

Books for Not-So-Eager Readers (1980)
This list of high interest, attractive books is intended to help teachers in meeting the needs of children who seldom see reading as a first-choice activity.

Guidelines for Contributors to the School Journal
These guidelines, produced by the School Publications Branch, provide information about the *School Journal* and give intending contributors an outline of editorial requirements.

School Publications Allocations 1983, Form E15/3A
This form sets out the scale of distribution according to school size and numbers of pupils at each class level, for the various publications for schools produced each year by the School Publications Branch. It provides an important base for forward quantitative planning, as well as the basis for subsequent accurate distribution of publications.

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Government Printing Office Services
This brochure produced by the New Zealand Government Printer, sets out the functions of the Government Printing Office and outlines its various customer services.

Set of the *Ready to Read* Series (1962–63)
These books comprise the original *Ready to Read* series produced by the Department of Education to assist teachers in teaching reading to children during their first two or three years at school. The last two miscellanies, *Stars in the Sky* and *Sliding and Flying*, have not been included.

Books for Junior Classes (1978)
The Department of Education's intention was always that the *Ready to Read* series should be complemented and supplemented by other suitable books. This classified guide is intended for teachers to use as a quick reference in finding the approximate level of a book in relation to the *Ready to Read* series, and the range of books available at the particular level. It can also be a valuable aid in organising books, and a buying guide. The guide is currently under review as part of the revision and extension of the *Ready to Read* series.

Set of the *Ready to Read* Series (1982–84) (Not complete)
This is a sample of the new books being produced as part of the *Ready to Read* revision and extension project.

Ready to Read : Introductory Notes (1982)
This booklet presented information to mark the issue of the first books in the revised and extended *Ready to Read* series.

Ready to Read Revision—Supplement to the *Education Gazette* of 1 August 1983.
This supplement provides information on the revised *Ready to Read* series, and a chart showing how the new material relates to the books in the original series. It also lists the material published by August 1983. It is an example of the measures taken to keep teachers informed on the progress being made in the revision and extension of the series.

The *Ready to Read Series*—Scope and Sequence Chart, September 1983
This publication provides information on the nature, background, and principles of development of the *Ready to Read* series. The information to be gained from the colour wheel, which appears on the back of each book in the series, is explained. The chart groups the titles into an approximate sequence for shared, guided, and independent reading and, through colours, indicates the levels within the three main stages of emergent, early, and fluent reading.

Suggestions for Making Enlarged Books (1978)
This booklet, produced as part of the Early Reading In-Service Course (ERIC), has been prepared to assist teachers in junior classes in making enlarged books for shared reading activities.

On the Way to Reading Kit (1978)
This kit contains audio tapes of the radio programmes produced by the Continuing Education Unit of Radio New Zealand in conjunction with the New Zealand Department of Education, and a set of books, *On the Way to Reading*, produced by the School Publications Branch in conjunction with the Continuing Education Unit. The tapes and the booklet follow the language growth of children through their pre-school years up to about

the age of seven, illustrate the methods used to introduce children to reading during their first two years at school, and suggest ways in which parents can help their children with their reading.

ERIC *Information for Teachers* (1980)
This leaflet provides information for teachers on the Early Reading In-Service Course (ERIC).

LARIC *Information for Teachers* (1983)
This leaflet provides information for teachers on the Later Reading In-Service Course (LARIC).

Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit Calendar, 1984
The Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit is one of the major agencies catering for the continuing education of teachers, and offers a wide range of distance education courses. The calendar sets out the areas in which courses are offered, indicates how the unit functions, and provides course regulations and prescriptions.

Advanced Studies for Teachers—Supplement to the *Education Gazette* 17 November 1982
This supplement, which is updated annually, provides detailed information on courses offered by the Advanced Studies for Teachers' Unit, and the courses provided for trained teachers by teachers' colleges.

Handbook for ASTU *School Based Study Groups* (1982)
This handbook sets out the conditions for the operation of school-based study groups which might be formed by teachers in a school who have enrolled in an advanced study course, and provides guidelines for convenors, tutors, and seminar leaders.

Education Advisory Services
This pamphlet lists the various advisory services available to teachers, and provides information on the particular functions of each service.

The following publications have been made available to overseas participants through funds provided by the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

Clay, Marie M. *Reading : The Patterning of Complex Behaviour* (Second Edition), Heinemann Educational Books, 1979.

Clay, Marie M. *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties :A Diagnostic Survey with Recovery Procedures* (Second Edition), Heinemann Educational Books, 1979.

Clay, Marie M. *Sand* (Concepts About Print Test), Heinemann, 1972.

Clay, Marie M. *Stones* (Concepts About Print Test), Heinemann, 1979.

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